



ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT 建築署

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3 June 2020

Mr. Anthony CHU
 Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee
 Legislative Council
 Legislative Council Complex
 1 Legislative Council Road
 Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr. CHU,

Public Accounts Committee

Consideration of Chapter 8 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 74 Provision and management of Community Green Stations

Thank you for your letter dated 20 May 2020 requesting response/information to facilitate the Public Accounts Committee's consideration of the above Chapter. Please find our reply below:

Part 2 – Provision of Community Green Stations

- 16) Regarding the 11 Community Green Stations (“CGSs”) mentioned in Table 3 in paragraph 2.11, how did you monitor the works progress? What had been done to facilitate the concerned contractors to complete the works on time? Was EPD or ArchSD partly responsible for the delay? According to paragraph 2.13, there was still delay in completion of works for three CGSs after consideration of extensions of time granted. Can you explain the details of each case (Sham Shui Po, Tuen Mun and Kwai Tsing CGSs)?

When carrying out construction works for CGSs, the contractors had encountered different difficulties which could not be anticipated or which were not under its control. For example, unforeseen underground public utilities had been encountered during underground drainage connection works to the

connecting point outside the project site. The project team was thus required to revise the original design or to arrange diversion of the public utilities obstructing the works; some of the works even involved excavation at busy roads requiring application for excavation permits involving complex coordination work, including repeated discussions with relevant government departments on temporary traffic management. Despite that ArchSD had proactively provided assistance to the contractors, the works could not proceed according to the original programme and delays occurred. Owing to the above, the contractors had applied for extensions of time in accordance with the contract conditions, and had been granted extensions of 1.5 to 14 months for completing the works.

Notwithstanding the extensions of time granted, due to deficiencies in the contractors' planning and coordination, the CGSs in Sham Shui Po, Tuen Mun and Kwai Tsing were still completed with delays of 1 to 3 months. The works progress was still unsatisfactory although ArchSD had closely monitored the works progress on site, discussed about measures to speed up the works with the contractor at regular site meetings and issued warning letters to the contractor. In this regard, ArchSD had imposed liquidated damages on the contractor timely in accordance with the contract conditions and had duly reflected its unsatisfactory performance in its performance reports.

- 17) According to paragraph 2.14, construction works of two CGSs were carried out before the approval of the related drawings and not in accordance with the approved drawings. As a result, the sorting areas in the storage blocks were built with floor areas less than those specified by EPD. What were the reasons for Contractor A to delay submission of structural drawings, jump the gun in starting the concerned works before approval, and then ignore contract requirement? Please advise whether any sanctions were imposed on Contractor A; if yes, the details; if not, why not. In this regard, what measures have been and will be taken to strengthen the monitoring of contractors?

Although Contractor A had been repeatedly reminded during site meetings to submit the required structural drawings before commencement of the relevant works on site, ArchSD noted that the erection of the relevant structural steel frame had been completed before the approval of all the related structural drawings. Warning letter was immediately issued to Contractor A, who was required to forthwith submit a remedial proposal for the inadequate space within the sorting area. An interview was conducted by the Project Director to urge Contractor A for prompt follow-up actions. Contractor A's unsatisfactory performance was also reflected in its performance report.

Thereafter, the project team implemented a series of monitoring actions on the contractor, including closer scrutiny of the contractor's document submissions and scheduling for site works, more clearly identification of major critical

building and structural elements, and constant review with the contractor on the short-term programme for construction of critical items. The contractor was also required by ArchSD to agree earlier with ArchSD's site representatives on the site inspection processes especially on the critical elements.

- 18) According to paragraph 2.19, water leakage was observed at various facilities in Sha Tin CGS since its commencement in May 2015, and the repair and water proofing / enhancement works cost about \$327,000 in total. Have you conducted any review to ascertain the reasons and responsibilities for the repeated water leakage? If yes, the details; if not, why not. What lessons have you learnt from this case for future planning and monitoring of construction works?

In order to reduce construction time and considering the temporary nature of the buildings, simple roof systems were adopted for Sha Tin CGS including the use of recycled freight containers as the building envelope or aluminium panels mounted on steel sub-frames with the joints between panels sealed by sealant. Water leakage mainly occurred at junctions between containers or between aluminium panels.

In order to resolve the water leakage, enhancement works were carried out by applying a layer of elastic waterproof membrane on the roofs. ArchSD has made reference to the experience learned from this case. In the implementation of subsequent CGS projects, roof systems of higher grade have been adopted instead of simple roof systems to enhance their reliability especially in waterproofing performance.

- 19) According to paragraph 2.20, toilet flushing problems were repeatedly observed at Sha Tin CGS for more than three years. What were the reasons for taking such a long time to resolve the problems? How are you going to ensure that no similar case will happen again in the future?

The flushing problem was due to the malfunction of different parts of the flushing system, including defective flushing water cistern, defective electronic operated flushing valves and blocked flushing water pipes etc. at different times during the period from December 2016 to May 2018, making the flushing system not functioning properly. Upon receipt of each flushing problem repair request, remedial repairs were arranged by ArchSD or the CGS operator according to their respective maintenance responsibilities. In order to resolve the flushing problem, ArchSD closely coordinated with EPD and the operator, and completed the installation of additional booster pumps in February 2020 so that the flushing system could function properly.

In handling future repair requests which might involve enhancement works at CGSs, ArchSD will coordinate with EPD in liaising closely with CGS operators for early proposal and completion of the enhancement works required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allen Leung', written in a cursive style.

(Allen LEUNG)

for Director of Architectural Services

c.c. Secretary for the Environment (fax no. 2537 7278)
Director of Environmental Protection (fax no. 2537 7278)
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