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

**Minutes of the 5th meeting
held in the Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 7 January 2009, 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, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon Paul CHAN Mo-po, MH, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Member attending:

Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP

Members absent:

Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP

Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP

Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Mr Joe C C WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Raymond YOUNG, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr Enoch LAM Tin-sing, JP	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) ²
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Miss Amy YUEN Wai-yin	Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands) ² , Development Bureau
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr Talisman WONG Chung-sang	Chief Engineer (Sha Tin), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms Janet WONG Chin-kiu	Principal Assistant Secretary (Recreation and Sport), Home Affairs Bureau
Mr YUE Chi-hang, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Miss Olivia CHAN Yeuk-oi	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) ² , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Gary WONG Chi-fai	Chief Executive Officer (Planning) ¹ (Acting), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Eddy YAU Kwok-yin, JP	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) ³ , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr LEE Yuk-man	Assistant Director (Libraries and Development), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Peter KAN Tat-sing	Chief Executive Officer (Planning) ² , Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms Mable CHAN	Deputy Secretary for Education (2)
Mr Raymond SY Kim-cheung	Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure and Research Support), Education Bureau

Mr CHAN Wing-tak

Chief Technical Adviser (Subvented Projects),
Architectural Services Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Debbie YAU

Chief Council Secretary (1)6

Staff in attendance:

Ms Angel SHEK

Senior Council Secretary (1)1

Ms Alice CHEUNG

Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1

Mr Frankie WOO

Legislative Assistant (1)2

Action

The Chairman reported that a total of 51 capital works projects of an amount of \$16.548 billion had been endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2008-2009 session so far.

Head 707 – New Towns and Urban Area Development

**PWSC(2008-09)58 718CL Ma On Shan development—roads,
drainage and sewerage works at
Whitehead and Lok Wo Sha phase 1**

2. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the proposal had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 15 December 2008. The proposal aimed to upgrade 718CL to Category A at an estimated cost of \$219.7 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices to carry out site formation and associated infrastructure at Lok Wo Sha (LWS), Ma On Shan.

3. Prof Patrick LAU expressed support for the proposal. Referring to Enclosure 1 to PWSC(2008-09)58, he enquired about the land use of the LWS-A Site and its connection to the Wu Kai Sha Railway Station.

4. The Chief Engineer (Sha Tin), Civil Engineering and Development Department (CE(ST), CEDD) said that the LWS-A site would be developed into a medium-density residential area by a private developer. The LWS area would be linked up with the Wu Kai Sha Railway Station by a footbridge adjacent to the LWS-A site.

5. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired about the progress and outcome of the archaeological field evaluation conducted to ascertain the impacts of the project on the Wu Kai Sha Archaeological Site, in particular whether any part of the Archaeological Site would be preserved. CE(ST), CEDD said that the evaluation

in question had already been completed, and there was no cultural remains found in the proposed works.

6. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2008-09)55 263RS Improvement works for Mong Kok Stadium

7. The Chairman advised that the Panel on Home Affairs (the HA Panel) had been consulted on the proposed works at the meeting on 12 December 2008. The proposal was to upgrade 263RS to Category A at an estimated cost of \$275.5 million in MOD prices for the improvement of Mong Kok Stadium (MKS).

8. Mr IP Kwok-him, Chairman of the HA Panel, said that while Panel members were in support of the proposal, they had raised a number of suggestions for the Administration's consideration. As it would take two years to complete the proposed works, members urged the Administration to put in place appropriate measures to mitigate the works impact on the adjacent areas, especially during the high season of the Flower Market. In particular, members were keen to ensure that suitable venues would be arranged during the reconstruction period for holding First Division League football matches. Some members considered that, in planning the project, the Administration should adopt an integrative approach by taking forward together the development of adjacent areas, such as the Flower Market and Bird Garden, to turn them into tourism attractions. One member considered that, apart from improvement of hardware facilities, the Administration should also promote the development of football to enhance the public's interest and participation in the sport. Some members suggested that the design of the facilities in the stadium should be user-oriented, and the number of seats at the spectator stands should be increased as far as feasible. There were also suggestions to improve the entrance/exit and arrangements pertaining to vehicular access and pedestrian flow in the vicinity of the stadium.

Project estimates

9. Ms Starry LEE expressed support for the proposal and urged the Administration to expedite the improvement works for the stadium. She noted from some media reports that there was a drastic increase in the estimated cost of the proposed project from around \$140 million when Yau Tsim Mong District Council (YTMDC) was consulted in August 2008 to \$275.5 million under the current proposal. She asked whether the increase was due to changes in project design.

10. The Director of Architectural Services (D Arch S) explained that the estimated project cost was made according to the Government's latest forecast of trend rate of change in the prices of public sector building and construction output

as well as market trends. As the consultation with YTMDC was conducted in August 2008, the then estimated project cost was based on the forecast of price movement made in September 2007. As for the current estimates, it had made reference to the rate of forecast price movement revised in September 2008, taking into account the escalating construction costs which were highest in August 2008. D Arch S further said that although there was some adjustment in the design to address the concern of YTMDC, the alteration did not bring about a notable increase in the estimated project costs.

11. Given the substantial increase in project estimates, Ms Starry LEE requested the Administration to ensure prudent use of public monies by making use of the contract price fluctuation system.

12. While expressing support for the proposal, Mr IP Kwok-him considered that the Administration should have provided more realistic project estimates to YTMDC in August 2008 for consultation, as project cost was one of the major considerations for the District Council to give support to the project.

13. D Arch S said that in working out the project estimates, reference would also be made to the quarterly tender price index for government works compiled by the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD). However, when YTMDC was consulted on the proposal in August 2008, not all the returned tender prices were available for updating the index. The Administration would endeavour to provide up-to-date project estimates in future as far as practicable when consulting stakeholders on public works projects.

Grass pitch

14. Mr Albert CHAN enquired whether automated sprinkler system would be used for watering the grass pitch upon completion of the improvement works. The Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, (AD(LS)2, LCSD) advised that the sprinkler system currently used in MKS was hose-free ring guns installed along the periphery of the grass pitch for automatic irrigation of the whole pitch within their designated radius ranges. The existing grass pitch and the sprinkler and drainage systems were in good condition, and it was not necessary to replace the sprinkler system.

15. Referring to the photographs in Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2008-09)55, which showed that the existing grass pitch appeared to be in a withering condition, Ms Miriam LAU enquired whether the Administration had any measures in place to improve the condition of the grass pitch.

16. AD(LS)2, LCSD said that the condition of the grass pitch was not clearly reflected in the first photograph in Enclosure 2. She explained that in dry seasons, the grass would turn yellowish, and winter rye grass seeds would be sowed to improve the general outlook of the lawn. She assured members that the existing grass pitch at MKS was in good condition and was to the general satisfaction of users.

Pitch alignment

17. While expressing support for the proposal, Mr Albert CHAN said that he was gravely concerned about the existing east-west alignment of the football pitch at MKS, which would hinder the conduct of football games in dusk. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that he had raised this concern during the Panel discussion but had not received favourable response.

18. D Arch S advised that it was not possible to adjust the alignment of the football pitch, because of site constraints. The proposed works already represented the best effort to improve the stadium. Mr Albert CHAN was of the view that as MKS was the only major venue on the Kowloon side to stage high-level local football matches and other events, the stadium should be improved up to a reasonable standard to meet public expectation. While understanding the site constraints in re-aligning the pitch, he suggested the Administration consider re-provisioning MKS to the Tai Hang Tung Recreation Ground (THTRG) on the other side of the road, for the provision of a pitch with a north-south alignment. In his view, it would not be value for money to refurbish MKS at such a high cost with an east-west alignment.

19. AD(LS)2, LCSD explained that as MKS had been in use for over 48 years, most of its facilities did not meet present-day requirements. It was therefore the Administration's plan to upgrade these facilities. If MKS was to be reprovisioned to THTRG, a much longer time would be required for the planning and project delivery.

20. Prof Patrick LAU asked whether the Administration had any long-term planning with regard to the development of THTRG, which in his view could be developed into a major sports venue with a more comprehensive range of facilities. AD(LS)2, LCSD said that the Administration did not have any concrete plan at the moment. Since THTRG was serving a different purpose from MKS and had its own clientele, the YMTDC, local residents and venue users would have to be consulted on its future planning, including whether it should replace MKS as a more suitable base for staging high-level football matches in the long run.

21. Sharing members' concern, Mrs Sophie LEUNG considered that the Administration should seriously consider members' suggestion on pitch alignment when planning new football pitches, such as the Football Academy to be built in Tseung Kwan O. Nevertheless, she was pleased to note the improvement measures proposed to facilitate crowd control especially after the matches, such as providing separate exits for spectators and football team players.

22. Mrs Sophie LEUNG said that the Legislative Council (LegCo) had passed a motion on "promoting the development of local football" on 4 June 2008. She urged the Administration to make reference to successful overseas experience (such as Japan), to create a favourable environment for establishing local football team brands, when conducting the detailed study to position the development of

local football.

23. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Recreation and Sport), Home Affairs Bureau (PAS(R&S), HAB) said that, in response to the carried motion and members' suggestions raised at the HA Panel, the Administration was preparing to conduct a study on the long-term development of football in Hong Kong. Acknowledging the remarkable efforts made by district football teams (e.g. Tai Po Football Club (NT Realty Wofoo Tai Po) and TSW Pegasus FC Limited) in promoting the sports at district level, the Administration considered it worthwhile to promote football locally. She advised that the Hong Kong Football Association Limited (HKFA) and other stakeholders would be engaged in conducting the study.

24. Ms Cyd HO expressed disappointment about the decline of local football development in recent years. As the development of sports hinged on the provision of hardware and software, she considered that the Administration should consult the stakeholders extensively when formulating policies on the long-term development of sport facilities, and not only consult the users of individual projects.

25. AD(LS)2, LCSD advised that the Administration had consulted venue users, in particular HKFA, as well as YMTDC in planning the improvement works of MKS. For example, upon the advice of HKFA, more function rooms would be provided at the stadium to facilitate the operation of major matches and events. Ms Cyd HO suggested that the Administration should broaden the base of consultation, in order to strike a balance between popularization and professionalization of local football and other sports.

Spectators' seats

26. Mr WONG Yuk-man expressed concern that, after the improvement works, the number of seats at the spectator stands would be significantly reduced to 6 500, which had fallen short of HKFA's expectation. He asked whether there was room to increase the number of seats at the spectator stands. Mrs Sophie LEUNG relayed the concerns of senior football fans that the seats at existing spectator stands were very uncomfortable and should be improved.

27. D Arch S said that in order to create a more comfortable environment for the spectators, the spectator stands at MKS would be reconstructed with 6 681 individual seats vis-à-vis the existing 7 712 non-fixed seats and this was the maximum capacity. D Arch S explained that there were constraints in providing more seats, as there were requirements for the minimum width of individual seats, the space required to provide barrier-free and emergency access, and the need to provide the seats on elevated levels to enhance spectators' experience in appreciating football matches. He said that although the number of seats under the current design would be less than the existing provision, it was the optimum that could be achieved under the current constraints. AD(LS)2, LCSD supplemented

that HKFA was also aware of the reduction in the number of seats but considered it acceptable given the overall improvement in the seating facilities. Mr WONG Yuk-man noted the explanation given by the Administration.

28. Prof Patrick LAU and Mr KAM Nai-wai suggested the Administration to make use of the space of the car parks behind the spectator stands on the east and west sides to provide a greater number of seats.

29. D Arch S said that, while it was technically feasible to extend the spectator stand to the space above the car parks to provide more seats, there were other considerations. For example, the car park near Boundary Street was meant to provide emergency access. AD(LS)2, LCSD added that the entrance plaza behind the spectator stand on the west side would serve as a buffer for crowd management and dispersal, in particular to ease the long queues during ticketing on event days to avoid obstructing the Flower Market Road.

30. Mr KAM Nai-wai was not convinced. He considered extending the spectator stands to the area above the car park would not affect the use of the space at the ground level where the car park was situated. D Arch S advised that additional emergency access would be required if the spectator stands were to be extended to a higher level and with an increase in the number of seating rows. There would also be an upsurge in project cost as cantilevers would be required to support the proposed structure, which in his view was not cost-effective.

31. The Chairman opined that although the use of cantilevers to support the raised stands would involve additional costs, he considered it worthwhile in view of the need to provide more seats for the increasing number of spectators at the stadium, and that the technical difficulties involved could be overcome.

Cover of spectator stands

32. Mr WONG Yuk-man noted with concern that while the spectator stands would be reconstructed at the four sides of the pitch, only the stands on the north and south sides would be provided with light weight covers. He asked about the feasibility of providing covers also for the stands on the east and west sides so that spectators would not be affected by adverse weather conditions when viewing football matches. Mrs Sophie LEUNG shared this view.

33. D Arch S and AD(LS)2, LCSD explained that, after due consideration, the spectator stands on the east and west sides would not be provided with covers in order to allow more sunlight penetration on the grass pitch. AD(LS)2, LCSD added that given the site was already surrounded by buildings, the provision of

covers for the spectator stands on all four sides would affect natural ventilation and instill a congestion feel.

34. Mr WONG Yuk-man was not convinced, and he requested the Administration to make reference to the semi-enclosure design of football pitches commonly found overseas. He stressed that the Administration should bring genuine improvement to MKS. It would disappoint the public if covers for the spectator stands would only be partially provided.

35. Mr KAM Nai-wai shared this concern. He considered that the light weight covers as shown in Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2008-09)55 would only enclose the spectator stands partially, and should not pose a problem of ventilation or sunlight penetration. As such, he strongly insisted that the Administration should provide covers for the spectator stands on the east and west sides, so as to mitigate the impact of weather on spectators when they watched football matches. AD(LS)2, LCSD reiterated the problem of hindering sunlight penetration onto the grass pitch. Nevertheless, LCSD would further look into the matter in consultation with ArchSD and users.

36. Ms Miriam LAU enquired whether the light weight white covers could be dismantled for cleaning. She considered that removing the covers regularly for cleaning could expose the grass pitch under sunlight. D Arch S advised that PTFE was the material to be used as covers for the stands. It was canvas-like and possessed after-rain self-cleansing properties, thereby saving the need to be removed for cleaning. This material had been adopted in previous projects, such as the Western District Wholesale Market and the Hong Kong Museum of Coast Defence, with proven durability and effectiveness in maintenance.

37. Mr Andrew CHENG said that hindrance of sunlight penetration was not a convincing reason for not providing covers for the said spectator stands. He also doubted whether the partially-enclosed covers for the spectator stands on the north and south sides would give spectators adequate shelter from rain or sunburn. He urged the Administration to re-consider the design in order to provide covers for all spectator stands. In this connection, he asked about the costs for the provision of covers under the current proposal, and the additional costs for including covers for the remaining stands.

38. D Arch S informed members that the costs for the covers for the spectator stands on the north and south sides was \$64.8 million, of which \$21.6 million was the cost of the PTFE materials and \$43.2 million for the associated steel roof structure. He did not have information on the additional cost of providing covers for the spectator stands on the east and west sides. Assuming the size of the additional covers was around one-third of that for the north and south sides, he estimated that the additional cost for the covers alone would be roughly around \$20 million.

39. Mr Andrew CHENG said that as the cost of additional covers was not high when compared to the overall project estimates, the Administration should consider

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members' request for providing covers for the spectator stands on the east and west sides and revert before the relevant FC meeting. The Chairman said that the suggestion was technically and financially feasible, and requested the Administration to consider members' views.

Other issues

40. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that the project had adopted various forms of energy efficient features. He enquired whether the Administration would reduce or abolish the levy of \$2,200 per hour for the use of floodlight, with a view to alleviating the hiring charges for users. AD(LS)2, LCSD responded that the Administration had no plan to change the charges at the moment.

41. Mr IP Kwok-him noted from the Administration's paper that the total costs for adoption of energy efficient features under the proposed project was around \$2 million, whereas about 2.6% of energy savings in the annual energy consumption would be achieved. He sought information on the estimated saving to be achieved by the relevant measures.

42. D Arch S advised that the project had adopted various forms of energy conservation features including energy efficient fluorescent tubes, light emitting diode type exit signs, renewable energy features through the installation of solar hot water system on the roof of the service building, greening features and recycled features incorporating a rainwater recycling system to collect rain water for landscape irrigation. While it was feasible to quantify the benefits of energy saving for some installations (such as the solar hot water system), it was not the case for other measures such as greening and rainwater recycling. In general, it was estimated that around 473 000 kWh of electricity would be consumed annually after completion of the project. Based on the calculation of electricity expenditure at around \$1/kWh, the estimated 2.6% of energy savings would yield a reduction of about \$12,000 per year.

43. Ms Starry LEE said that the local community was concerned that there was no alternative venue for football games and other leisure activities during the temporary closure of MKS for improvement works. She asked the Administration to enhance its communication with local residents to allay such worries. The Administration took note of the suggestion.

Conclusion

44. In summing up, the Chairman said that members had urged for the addition of seats and the provision of covers for the spectator stands on the east and west sides. He advised that LCSD should be more flexible in responding to members' request especially when there was a consensus of views from members for adjustment of project design and scope. He also requested the Administration to consider members' suggestion on the long-term development of THTRG.

45. The item was voted on and endorsed. Mr Albert CHAN and Mr WONG

Yuk-man requested to put on record that they had reservation about the proposed improvement works. Mr Andrew CHENG and Prof Patrick LAU requested the item be separately voted on at the FC meeting.

The way forward

46. Prof Patrick LAU enquired whether the Administration would revise the proposal to include additional covers for the two spectator stands on the east and west sides for members' consideration at the relevant FC meeting.

47. Mr Andrew CHENG suggested that the Administration could provide a revised plan for consideration by the HA Panel at its earliest meeting or by circulation to the Panel. If there was urgency in taking forward the project, the Administration could consider addressing members' concerns by providing supplementary information to PWSC before submitting the proposal for FC's consideration.

48. Mr IP Kwok-him said that it would cause delay to the project if HA Panel was to be consulted again. It would be more pragmatic for the Administration to put forward supplementary information or a revised plan to FC. Mrs Sophie LEUNG agreed with Mr IP and requested the Administration to state in the FC paper an undertaking to study the suggestion of providing covers for the spectator stands on the east and west sides, together with the estimated additional costs, to enable FC to take a decision on the funding proposal.

49. Mr WONG Yuk-man stressed that his suggestions concerning the covers and seats at the spectator stands were meant for genuine improvement of the facilities, which the Administration should seriously re-consider. However, he did not consider it appropriate for the proposal to be considered again by the HA Panel, after having been voted on and endorsed by PWSC. He added that it would not be appropriate for non-Panel members who had not attended the meeting of HA Panel to advise on the need of further consultation with the Panel.

50. Mr Alan LEONG said that according to his understanding, the decision of PWSC was not binding on FC members. If the subsequent submission to FC did not address the concerns raised by PWSC members, members could still raise objection at the FC meeting.

51. Mr Albert CHAN did not consider there was urgency in taking forward the proposed works. While the Administration could put forth submissions that had been endorsed by PWSC for FC's approval, he considered that members could still request for further deliberation of the project at the Panel if necessary.

52. Mr Andrew CHENG clarified that his suggestion of reverting to the Panel was based on an observation of past practices that the relevant Panel could consider whether and how a proposed project should be taken forward to address members' concerns raised at PWSC or FC meetings. He did not intend to impose his suggestion on the Panel or other members. He opined that all members,

including those who had not taken part in the discussion of the project at the Panel meeting, had the right to express their views at PWSC and FC meetings concerned.

53. The Chairman ordered that the meeting be suspended for five minutes, as Mr WONG Yuk-man and Mr Andrew CHENG continued their arguments.

54. When the meeting resumed, the Chairman summed up the discussion that members had endorsed the proposal at the meeting, but had requested the Administration to seriously consider their views and suggestions on providing covers also for the spectators stands on the east and west sides. In this connection, he suggested that the Administration could consider submitting a revised proposal to FC if necessary. He also advised that members could request for separate voting on this item at the relevant FC meeting. It would be for the Administration to consider when the revised proposal or supplementary information would be ready for consideration by FC.

55. PAS(R&S), HAB expressed appreciation of the various suggestions put forward by members. She undertook that LCSD and relevant departments would actively explore members' suggestions, and consult HKFA and the local community to further improve the project design. The Administration would endeavour to deliver the project in an expeditious manner.

**PWSC(2008-09)56 49RG Public library and indoor recreation
centre in Area 3, Yuen Long**

56. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the proposal had been circulated to the HA Panel on 9 December 2008. The proposal aimed to upgrade 49RG to Category A at an estimated cost of \$875 million in MOD prices for the construction of a public library and indoor recreation centre in Area 3, Yuen Long.

Library and central reserve stack

57. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the proposal. He noted that a central reserve stack for library materials with a floor area of some 3 100 square metres (m²), would be included in the project to replace the existing one at Yu Chui Shopping Centre, Yu Chui Court, Sha Tin which was a rented premises of about 3 040 m². In view of the small increase in floor area by only 60 m², he doubted whether the capacity of the new reserve stack could meet future growth.

58. The Assistant Director (Libraries and Development), LCSD (AD(L&D), LCSD) explained that currently some 500 000 library materials of Hong Kong Public Libraries were stored in the central reserve stack at Sha Tin. As the proposed site would allow the use of compact-style mobile shelves, the new central reserve stack could enable the storage of about 700 000 library materials, which would meet the rapid development of library collections and the fast growth of public library service. AD(L&D), LCSD also informed members that the

proposed library, with a larger floor area of some 2 900 m² compared to 1 540 m² of the existing Yuen Long Public Library (YLPL), would cope with the increasing demand in library service for more library materials and reading space, as well as the wider use of information technologies to support the infrastructure and operation of the library. In response to further enquiry of Mr WONG Kwok-hing on the transitional arrangements, AD(L&D), LCSD said that YLPL would be closed only after the new library had come into operation so that the provision of library services to the local residents would not be disrupted.

59. While supporting the expeditious provision of library services to meet district needs, Mr KAM Nai-wai was not convinced of the need to re-locate the central reserve stack to the proposed site. He considered it uneconomical to provide a floor at a new building just for storage purpose. The Administration should explore other options, such as old factory buildings, to relocate the central reserve stack.

60. AD(L&D), LCSD explained that in relocating the central reserve stack to the proposed site, the Administration had considered the merit of its proximity to the proposed public library in terms of coordination and delivery. In reply to Mr KAM Nai-wai, AD(L&D), LCSD said that the planning standards for libraries had undergone review in recent years, with the latest standard space requirements for district library and major library being 2 900 m² and 6 200 m² respectively, compared to the corresponding old standards of 2 200 m² and 3 310 m².

61. Prof Patrick LAU said that it appeared from the Artist's Impression in Enclosure 2 to PWSC(2009-09)56 that the proposed building would be a sealed structure with a severe lack of windows, which in his view was undesirable having regard to the need for natural light penetration to create a better reading atmosphere at the library. Prof LAU also said that it would facilitate members' consideration of public works projects if more detailed plans were made available for their information. In this connection, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide in future submissions more detailed layout plans, including sectional plans, for members' reference. As regards the projects under discussion, it seemed that the number of windows for the library would be quite limited.

62. D Arch S explained that the current design of the library floor had adopted the concept of "clear-storey" and the configuration of the building had allowed for the penetration of natural light into the library. Windows would be installed where appropriate, taking into account the privacy of the residents of Crystal Park adjacent to the proposed site. He undertook to provide more detailed layout plans showing the provision of windows for the library before the relevant FC meeting. AD(L&D), LCSD added that in drawing up the detailed design, the Administration would pay attention to the provision of windows and natural lighting to nurture a more pleasant reading environment at the library.

Indoor recreation centre

63. Prof Patrick LAU considered the present proposal of locating the indoor recreation centre on top of the library and the central reserve stack undesirable. He opined that the Administration should have included in the project the piece of land currently deployed as a temporary car park beside the proposed site. This would allow greater design flexibility, such as accommodating the recreation centre and the library at the same level.

64. D Arch S explained that the indoor recreation centre was located on the top floor as it was a structure of long span and it would not be structurally efficient to place heavy-loading structures such as the library and the central reserve stack on top of it. Besides, the central reserve stack and an activity room, which would be located at the floor between the recreation centre and the library, would effectively serve as noise buffers to mitigate the noise impact of the activities conducted at the recreation centre on the library.

65. The Chairman did not subscribe to the Administration's explanation. He considered that there were many other alternatives to deal with the complications in relation to the building structure and loading in question.

66. Mr Albert CHAN considered it inadequate to provide only one multi-purpose activity room at the proposed indoor recreation centre, as there was a keen demand from the local residents in Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai for such facility for organizing various interest classes. He urged LCSD to review its planning guidelines and adjust the provision in accordance with the changing needs of the community.

67. The Assistant Director (Leisure Services)3, LCSD (AD(LS)3, LCSD) advised that the number of multi-purpose activity rooms and other recreational facilities were planned and provided in accordance with the projected local demand which varied in different districts. Although there was only one multi-purpose activity room in the proposed recreation centre, the provision of other rooms (i.e. table tennis room, fitness room and children's play room) would likely make up for the needs for conducting different types of activities. Nevertheless, the Administration would study the feasibility of providing more activity rooms at the detailed design stage. Mr Albert CHAN further suggested that the table tennis room should be flexibly designed to cater for multiple purposes.

Greening initiatives

68. Prof Patrick LAU and Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern about the lack of greening features under the proposed project. D Arch S said that in addition to incorporating greening for the entire rooftop, the podium would also be landscaped to enhance the greening appeal of the building. Mr CHAN urged the Administration to consider further enhancement of greening initiatives for the project, especially vertical greening. He also requested the Administration to

provide in future submissions detailed information on greening measures to be taken for the proposed projects. Mr KAM Nai-wai shared this concern. He drew the Administration's attention to his motion on air pollution and public health to be moved at the LegCo meeting on the same day, and stressed the importance of greening as one of the means to combat air pollution.

Ventilation of the area

69. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming expressed support for the proposal to meet the keen demand of the growing population in Yuen Long for library services and recreational facilities. However, he relayed the concern of residents of Ma Tin Tsuen (MTT), which comprised mainly 3-storey buildings, that the proposed site was meant to serve as a natural ventilation outlet for the area as the private developments behind MTT currently under construction would likely create a "wall effect" after completion. He sought the Administration's assessment of the impact of the proposed project on air ventilation of MTT.

70. D Arch S responded that the design of the proposed building which was only some 35 m high (i.e. lower than the adjacent Yuen Long Theatre (YLT)) and oval in shape, had already taken into account the need to facilitate ventilation effectively in the area. Nevertheless, the Administration would take note of Mr CHEUNG's concern in the preparation of the detailed design for the project.

Pedestrian entrance and walkway

71. Mr TAM Yiu-chung considered it necessary to adopt a more integrated design for the entire area of the proposed facilities and YLT. He referred to the proposal of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong made earlier, and urged the Administration to take forward beautification works for the walkway leading to the pedestrian entrance of the proposed library and indoor recreation centre, such as provision of covers, better road surfacing and landscaping works, so that the walkway could blend in with the cultural and sporty atmosphere associated with the proposed facilities.

72. AD(LS)3, LCSD advised that the said walkway fell outside the project scope, and its beautification works, if any, could be dealt with separately through recurrent funding allocated to Yuen Long District Council (YLDC) for minor works and facility improvement works. He undertook to discuss with YLDC in due course.

73. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that YLDC had already expressed support for the suggested enhancement works. As the works would only involve limited expenditure, it would be better to incorporate such works under the proposed project to ensure a coherent design. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment agreed to reflect the suggestion to the Highways Department with a view to exploring possible beautification of the public pedestrian road outside the project site. She would write to Mr TAM on the outcome of the discussion.

(post-meeting note: The Administration subsequently advised that the Highways Department, ArchSD and LCSD would jointly follow up on Mr TAM Yiu-chung's suggestion.)

Consultation

74. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that members were often caught in a dilemma between endorsing the projects as proposed to enable them to be taken forward expeditiously to meet local demand, and urging the Administration to improve the projects before proceeding further. He considered that the Administration should consult the relevant Panels and PWSC much earlier, so that members could give their views on the project design in a more timely manner. He suggested that, the Administration should brief Panel members in parallel to the consultation with YLDC, so that members' views on the project design could be taken into consideration.

75. The Chairman explained that at the beginning of each legislative session, the Administration would provide a forecast of submissions for the year to PWSC for circulation to relevant Panels, to enable members to consider whether any projects would require detailed discussions at Panel meetings. It would be up to individual Panels to decide how and when Panel members should be consulted. The Chairman further advised that policy issues, including the design aspects of proposed projects, should best be deliberated at Panel meetings.

76. Mr Abraham SHEK said that as PWSC members might not be able to attend the relevant discussion at the Panel meetings, consultation with PWSC members should be conducted at an earlier stage. Mr Albert CHAN suggested the Administration to conduct briefing sessions, say at quarterly intervals, to gauge the views of PWSC members on the preliminary design of capital works projects to be submitted. The Chairman requested the Administration to note members' views and suggestions.

Conclusion

77. Summing up, the Chairman recapped members' concerns about adequate provision of windows for the library, the reasons for locating the indoor recreation centre above the library, and the enhancement of greening measures for the building. He requested the Administration to address members' concerns and provide a written response before the relevant FC meeting. He also requested the Administration to provide more detailed layout plans in the future submissions of public works projects.

Admin

(post-meeting note: The information provided by the Administration was circulated on 10 February 2009 vide LC Paper No. PWSC43/08-09.)

78. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2008-09)57 264RS Swimming pool complex in Area 1 (San Wai Court), Tuen Mun

79. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the proposal had been circulated to the HA Panel on 3 December 2008. The proposal aimed to upgrade 264RS to Category A at an estimated cost of \$791.4 million in MOD prices for the development of a swimming pool complex in Area 1 (San Wai Court), Tuen Mun.

80. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the proposal. Noting that the Administration had consulted the Tuen Mun District Council three times in the past years (in 2005, 2007 and 2008), he urged the Administration to expedite the project and enquired about the earliest time that the construction works could commence.

81. D Arch S said that the Administration would conduct tendering for the proposed project upon FC's approval on the project. Given the lead time required for processing the tenders, the earliest possible time to start construction would be May 2009.

82. Mr Albert CHAN supported expediting delivery of the proposed project. Referring to the site plan in Enclosure 1 to PWSC(2008-09)57, he enquired about the design of the indoor heated swimming pool. As the pool appeared to be circular in shape, he was concerned that regular swimmers might find it inconvenient as they were used to practise in straight lanes.

Admin 83. AD(LS)3, LCSD clarified that the indoor heated swimming pool was square in shape, with measurement of 25m by 25m. At the request of Mr Albert CHAN, the Administration agreed to provide the layout plan of the indoor heated swimming pool before the relevant FC meeting for members' reference.

(post-meeting note: The information provided by the Administration was circulated on 10 February 2009 vide LC Paper No. PWSC44/08-09.)

84. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 708 – Capital Subventions and Major Systems and Equipment

PWSC(2008-09)59 29EA Redevelopment of Sheng Kung Hui St. James' Primary School at Kennedy Road, Wan Chai

85. The Chairman advised members that the Panel on Education had been consulted on 24 October 2005 on the review of the School Building Programme (SBP). Panel members noted the Administration's plan on the redevelopment or

re-provisioning of existing schools with sub-standard facilities. Members noted that the present proposal was to upgrade 29EA to Category A at an estimated cost of \$200.8 million in MOD prices for in-situ redevelopment of Sheng Kung Hui (SKH) St. James' Primary School (SJPS) at Kennedy Road, Wanchai. SJPS was at present operating in mixed mode with whole-day and bi-sessional classes.

86. Ms Cyd HO, Chairman of the Panel on Education, said that the Administration had consulted the Panel of the last term. The then Panel had expressed support for the Administration's proposal under SBP to cater for the conversion of bi-sessional primary schools into whole-day operation, and for the redevelopment or re-provisioning of existing schools with sub-standard facilities. However, she expressed concern that under the present proposal, SJPS would be co-located on the same lot with other service units of the school sponsoring body, i.e. SKH St. James' Church (SJC) and St. James' Settlement (SJS), which she considered very undesirable in view of the small site area. She sought the Administration's explanation on the proposed co-location arrangements, and how the current design could ensure students' safety in such a congested school environment.

87. The Deputy Secretary for Education (2) (DS(Ed)2) said that the co-location of SJPS on the same lot with SJC and SJS followed the existing arrangement, although an integrated design approach was not common in the redevelopment or re-provisioning of schools. SJC used to share the use of its facilities, such as the hall, with SJPS. As these units had a long history of service in Wan Chai District since the 1950's and established a strong network within the neighbourhood, the school sponsoring body strongly requested to maintain its operation base in Wan Chai and re-develop the three units in-situ. The plan had the support of the SJPS's Parents' and Teachers' Association, and the alumni (with architectural expertise) was also engaged in the design process. Due to the size constraint of the site area, much efforts had been made to maximize utilization of space in the current design.

88. DS(Ed)2 advised that in the present projects, due consideration had been given to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines whereby the redeveloped school premises should meet the planning target of providing 2 m² of open space per student. The standard could be met with the provision of some 2 000 m² of open space after redevelopment, and with a reduced student population from 1 025 (under the mixed mode operation) to 750 (under the whole-day schooling mode). DS(Ed)2 further advised that the proposed design had incorporated the necessary fire prevention measures, such as automatic sprinkler installations and escape exit routes, and approved by the Fire Services Department. Besides, to mitigate the impact of school bus traffic on the narrow carriageway of Kennedy Road where SJPS was situated, the facilities of the three co-located units would all be accommodated above the podium level, so as to make way for the provision of school bus lay-bys and parking space for private vehicles at the podium and lower level.

89. Ms Cyd HO was unconvinced and requested to put on record her view

that the proposed co-location of the three units within such a small site area was an extremely undesirable arrangement. She cautioned that the Administration should avoid making similar proposals in future school redevelopment projects. She considered that even though the school sponsoring body made such a request, the co-location approach should be adopted only if a suitable site with much larger area was available.

90. Prof Patrick LAU also expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed design. Considering that the site area for building a 30-classroom primary school should be at least 6 000 m², he did not subscribe to the Administration's justifications for the co-location arrangement within the small area. He considered it undesirable to accommodate the school facilities at an elevated level, as students would have to travel extra levels before reaching the classrooms. Besides, the screen-like design of the building would create a "wall effect" in the vicinity, which in his view should not have been endorsed by the Wan Chai District Council (WCDC). Prof LAU suggested that the Administration should pursue other alternatives, such as seeking a suitable site under the urban renewal project in Wan Chai to re-provision SJPS.

91. While supporting the proposal, Mr Abraham SHEK shared Prof Patrick LAU's concerns. He referred to the objections to the "Mega Tower" complex in the Hopewell Centre II Project and commented that the planning standards and development restrictions were applied inconsistently for different projects.

92. Miss Tanya CHAN observed that the vertical expansion of the proposed school premises would increase the development density and bring about adverse visual impact to the adjacent area. In view of calls for lesser screen-like buildings and the concern about the traffic impact on Kennedy Road, she urged the Administration to re-consider the possibility of re-provisioning the school at another site. As a non-executive director of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Board, Miss CHAN said she would relay Prof Patrick LAU's views to URA for consideration.

93. Miss Tanya CHAN further enquired whether the same project design had been presented to WCDC members when they were consulted on the proposal. DS(Ed)2 advised that the Administration had consulted WCDC on the project in July 2008, and members of WCDC had already considered the various factors, including the demand of educational and social services in the area. DS(Ed)2 also informed members that to address the local concern about possible traffic congestion along Kennedy Road, the school sponsoring body had decided to advance the school opening hour so that all school buses could arrive at the school before the morning rush hours. In addition, with the conversion of SJPS to whole-day schooling, the frequency of school bus trips would also be reduced from four to two rounds daily. Since some 40% of SJPS students would commute between home and school by public transport or on foot, DS(Ed)2 assured members that the anticipated impact of school bus traffic on Kennedy Road would be limited.

94. The item was voted on and endorsed. Prof Patrick LAU requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

(post-meeting note: The Secretariat had subsequently been informed by Prof Patrick LAU that his request for separate voting on this item was withdrawn.)

95. The meeting ended at 10:43 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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