

Supplementary Information on

**FCR(2011-11)33 : Injection of Additional \$1-billion Funding to
Operation Building Bright**

for the Finance Committee Meeting on 24 June 2011

This note provides supplementary information concerning the sponsorship of works relating to barrier-free access facilities under the Operation Building Bright (the Operation).

(a) Funding arrangement for providing barrier-free access facilities

(b) Extent of barrier-free access facilities to be subsidised

2. The Operation is a special measure for preserving jobs amidst the 2008 financial tsunami, launched by the Government in collaboration with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) and Urban Renewal Authority (URA). It provides subsidies and one-stop technical assistance to help owners of old and dilapidated buildings to carry out repair and maintenance works. The one-off Operation aims to achieve the dual objective of creating more job opportunities for the construction sector amidst the financial tsunami as well as improving safety and maintenance of old buildings.

3. As approved by the Finance Committee under FCai (No. FCR(2009-10)3) on 24 April 2009, the grant of the Operation must first be used for repair and maintenance works in common areas of target buildings relating to the structural and fire safety of buildings as well as the sanitary facilities. After covering the cost of the works stated above, any remaining grant may be used for additional repair and improvement works in the common areas. The lists of works under the two priorities can be found in Enclosure 1 of FCai (No. FCR(2011-12)33).

4. The Administration has received views from some stakeholders that the grants of the Operation should also cover improvement and maintenance works in respect of barrier-free access facilities for persons with disabilities at common areas of buildings. Such works can improve the functioning of buildings for the physically challenged and elderly and are conducive to proper building management. Whilst these facilities have so far been considered on a case-by-case basis, we propose that such works

should be explicitly included in the scope of works for the Operation. Such facilities are proposed to be placed under the “second priority” list of works allowable under the Operation. Other such works include, for example, fire safety upgrading and lift repair and maintenance works.

5. The proposed refinement of the scope of works will not affect the maximum amount of grant to be provided to each target building as the grants for each unit and each elderly owner-occupier’s unit will continue to be capped at \$16,000 and \$40,000 respectively. In other words, for Category 1 target buildings (and Category 2 target buildings of which the owners/owners' corporations (OCs) organise repair works by themselves), the owners/OC of the building will have the discretion to decide how to use the remaining grant to carry out additional repair and improvement works in the common areas (including maintenance or improvement works for barrier-free access facilities) after covering the cost for repair and maintenance works in common areas relating to the structural and fire safety of buildings as well as the sanitary facilities.

6. If additional funding is needed, eligible owners/OC of a building may consider applying for subsidy under the Integrated Building Maintenance Assistance Scheme jointly administered by the HKHS and URA. Eligible elderly owner-occupiers may also apply for grants of up to \$40,000 per head under the Building Maintenance Grant Scheme for Elderly Owners. Owners can also obtain loans of up to \$1 million from the Buildings Department (BD)’s Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme.

(c) Implementation of works of barrier-free access facilities

7. For Category 1 target buildings (and Category 2 target buildings of which the owners/OCs organise repair works by themselves), maintenance or improvement works for barrier-free access facilities will be carried out by the registered contractors engaged by the owners/OCs of the buildings. For those Category 2 target buildings of which the owners/OCs have failed to carry out the works required by repair orders issued by the BD, the Department will carry out the works on behalf of the owners/OCs. If the relevant repair orders cover maintenance or improvement works for barrier-free access facilities, the BD will carry out the works accordingly.