

香港特別行政區政府

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Ms. Sharon CHUNG  
Clerk to Panel on Development  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

23 July 2013

Dear Ms. CHUNG,

**Demolition of Ho Tung Gardens**

I refer to Dr. Hon. Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok's letter of 11 July 2013 addressed to the Chairman of the Legislative Council Panel on Development. In response to the invitation of the Chairman of the Panel, I would like to provide the following information.

2. The Secretary for Development convened a press conference in December 2012 to announce that the Chief Executive in Council, after considering the owner's objection to the intended declaration of Ho Tung Gardens as a monument, directed that the intended declaration shall not be made by the Antiquities Authority. Under section 4(6) of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (Cap 53), the direction of the Chief Executive in Council shall be final.

3. Although Ho Tung Gardens will not be declared as a monument, the Secretary for Development still earnestly hopes that the owner will be persuaded to preserve Ho Tung Gardens as far as possible, including allowing government officials to enter Ho Tung Gardens to conduct detailed recording. During the period from December 2012 to June 2013, the Secretary for Development has written a total of seven letters to the owner to make the above requests and express the Government's willingness of paying a sum in return for accessing Ho Tung Gardens to conduct recording. It is a pity that the owner has declined the requests.

4. Since Ho Tung Gardens is not a monument protected by the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, the owner can redevelop it in accordance with the building plan and demolition plan previously approved by the Buildings Department. We noticed that scaffolding works have already been carried out on the main building of Ho Tung Gardens, and we believe that the owner may proceed with the demolition works soon. We have sent a letter to the owner again, appealing to the owner to preserve the garden area and expressing our willingness to provide financial assistance and technical advice.

5. Furthermore, since articles inside Ho Tung Gardens are private property, the owner has the right to decide how to handle them.

Yours sincerely,

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

(Ms Vivian Ko)

for Secretary for Development

c.c. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (attn.: Mr. Tom MING)