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31 December 2015

Mr Anthony Chu
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

Consideration of Chapter 3 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 65

Use and disposal of vacant school premises

I refer to your letters of 17 and 18 December 2015 on the captioned subject. Please find attached the request information, except for item (f) and (t) as requested vide your letter of 17 December 2015. The outstanding information will follow shortly. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



(Mrs Elina Chan)
for Secretary for Education

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Director of Housing
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Director of Audit

**Consideration of Chapter 3 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 65
Use and disposal of vacant school premises**

**The Administration's Response to
Issues Raised in Letters of 17 and 18 December 2015**

Letter of 17 December 2015

- (a) According to paragraph 2.7, there were 14 vacant school premises (“VPS”) not included in the database of the 234 VSP kept by the Infrastructure and Research Support Division (“IRSD”) of the Education Bureau (“EDB”). Please explain how the database of VSP are compiled by IRSD and the reasons for omitting the 14 VSP in the database;**
- (b) According to paragraph 2.2(a) the VSP database was updated based on the information provided by the Regional Education Offices (“REOs”). Please explain why REOs were not aware of the existence of the 14 VSP within their regions? Have REOs conducted any physical inspection or stock-take exercise on the number of VSP within their regions to ensure accuracy of the VSP database?**
- (c) Please provide details on the 14 VSP, including the year the school was built and ceased operation, reasons for vacating the premises, its size, location and physical conditions, its current use and land status;**
- (d) What improvement measures had been/would be taken by IRSD to ensure that the database of VSP contained the most comprehensive and up-to-date information? How could IRSD ensure that all VSP are identified and included in the VSP database? and**
- (e) Please provide a timetable for implementing improvement measures on the mechanism in identifying, compiling and maintaining information regarding VSP and management of the VSP database.**

I.1 IRSD of EDB has been tasked to handle VSP since July 2005. Before that, there was no designated section within EDB specifically tasked to take care of the matter. A database on VSP was set up by IRSD with information available at that point of time. The database has been updated over the years mainly with input from REOs.

I.2 All along, individual school premises may become vacant for various reasons, e.g. after reprovisioning of a school to premises with better facilities, after a school has ceased to operate, after a school has merged with another school and started to operate from another location, etc. More premises have become vacant after the introduction of the policy on consolidation of under-utilised primary schools (“Consolidation Policy”)¹ in the 2003/04 school year. It was in this context that EDB started to handle VSP more systematically. Information on VSP before the implementation of the Consolidation Policy was however neither complete nor comprehensive. The database of VSP compiled based on the information available in 2005 could therefore not be regarded as a complete or comprehensive record on all VSP. In addition, the database was designed in a way that it contains all VSP that have been known to IRSD since July 2005 (e.g. 234 VSP was included in the database as at 30 April 2015 as stated in the Audit Report). It includes those VSP which have been or are going to be demolished for other uses, as well as those VSP that EDB have “returned” under the central clearing house mechanism, i.e. EDB has informed the Planning Department (PlanD) and relevant departments such as the Lands Department (LandsD) and Housing Department (HD) that the premises are not required by EDB for educational uses. “Return” of VSP by EDB in accordance with the central clearing house mechanism does not necessarily mean that the physical possession of the premises or sites where the VSP is located has been delivered when private land is involved.

I.3 The Audit Commission (“Audit”) conducted a sample check on the school registration database maintained by the School Registration and Compliance Section (“SR&C Section”) of EDB and noted 14 closed

¹ Under the Consolidation Policy, public sector primary schools failing to attract the minimum threshold number of primary school students would not be allocated primary one class.

schools and hence potential VSP were not among the 234 VSP included in the database of VSP. We have looked into these 14 cases in consultation with LandsD. Details of our findings are summarised at **Annex 1**.

I.4 Among the 14 cases, eleven of them involve private lots with no cessation of user clause in the land lease. Eight of the schools in question are/were private schools. As at 21 December 2015, 10 out of the 14 premises in question were in use and seven of them were for school use. In fact, it was found that four of them were “mistaken” as closed schools because of the change of the school name or the operation status of the schools in relation to the level of education services provided as captured in the registration records. For the remaining seven premises, one premises on private land was being used for other educational or welfare services, and two premises located on sites involving government land were deployed for community uses under Short Term Tenancy (STT) and Government Permit arrangements respectively by LandsD for the whole or part of the government land portion. As regards the four sites with premises remained vacant, three were located on private land and one on a site involving both private and government land. Of these four sites, one has been planned for conversion into a post-graduate hostel while LandsD was processing an STT application regarding the use of the government land portion on one site, and a temporary waiver application on a portion of the private land of another site. The remaining VSP was located on a private land with user clauses virtually unrestricted and with no cessation of user clause in the land lease.

I.5 Due to the reasons as set out in paragraph I.2 above, the current database on VSP could hardly capture all VSP, especially those vacated long time ago. EDB is reviewing the mechanism for data collection and updating, including the identification and categorisation of VSP, with a view to better monitoring and managing the use and disposal of VSP. We will also draw up an internal manual to set out the requirements and guidelines on the identification, screening, allocation and management of VSP for all related EDB sections to follow. Regarding the suggestion of reviewing and updating the database on VSP by making reference to the entries under the school registration

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Please see Appendix 28 of this Report for Annex 1.*

database, as illustrated in paragraph I.4 above, we are mindful that school closure as shown in the registration records might not necessarily lead to VSP. Nevertheless, to ensure that the database on VSP could be as comprehensive as practicable, we are going to conduct a stock-taking exercise by comparing the two databases to identify possible missed cases of VSP, if any. REOs will then conduct site visits to gather further information to ascertain whether the premises are indeed vacated. In parallel, we will seek LandsD's advice on the land status of these potential cases where appropriate, which is crucial information for consideration of possible follow-up action, if necessary. If the potential cases are confirmed to have given rise to VSP, we will update the database on VSP and follow up with the VSP based on the established mechanism accordingly. We aim at completing the abovementioned actions, which involve over 3,000 entries in the registration database, in six months' time. In addition, under the above-mentioned enhanced mechanism, SR&C Section will be required to inform IRSD whenever there is any new entry on school closure. IRSD will then follow up with the respective REO and LandsD for updating the database on VSP, and above all, to handle the new VSP, if any, according to the established mechanism.

- (g) At the meeting mentioned in (f), the Planning Department (“PlanD”) would serve as a central clearing house to consider suitable alternative uses for VSP returned to the Government, but PlanD would not be the management agent for VSP before their reallocation. Please explain how the Government could ensure a timely and efficient disposal of VSP if no dedicated government department was to oversee such allocation; and**

Letter of 18 December 2015

- (a) A flowchart on the mechanism for handling of VSP, including actions to be taken for identifying, screening and assessing VSP, and procedures for putting VSP to different uses, the government bureaux/departments involved and their respective responsibilities, for VSP on (i) government land; (ii) private land, the lease of which contains a cessation/diminution of user clause; and (iii) private land, the lease of which does not contain a cessation/diminution of user clause.**

- (b) Details of the central clearing house mechanism as stated in paragraph 2.4 that a meeting was held by the then Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply in October 2011, which introduced the central clearing house mechanism for handling VSP in a coordinated manner.**

II.1 As advised by the Development Bureau and PlanD, the central clearing house mechanism for handling VSP is set out as follow:

- (i) once EDB confirms that the vacant or to-be-vacated school premises are no longer required by EDB for school or other educational uses and could be released, EDB would refer them to PlanD which would consider suitable alternative uses for the sites. For premises which were proposed to be used for other educational uses, EDB would put forward to PlanD its proposed use with justifications. PlanD, in its role as a “central clearing house”, would review these vacant or to-be-vacated school sites and consider whether such sites are suitable for Government, Institution or Community (G/IC) or other uses (including residential uses) in the long term, taking into account views from the concerned government bureaux/departments and relevant factors including the site context, surrounding environment, transport facilities etc.
- (ii) The focus of PlanD’s review is to examine the possible long-term uses of the vacant and to-be-vacated school sites and assess their potential for G/IC, residential or other uses. In general, alongside other land use reviews, PlanD may consider:
- whether the sites have already been committed or proposed for other G/IC uses to meet the local/district need, having regard to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines;
 - whether the sites are suitable for residential use having regard to considerations such as site area, land ownership, location, proximity to residential neighbourhood, compatibility with the surrounding areas, availability of

access and infrastructure, site constraints (remote location, very small site area, steep slope etc.), and whether the technical constraints for development are surmountable;

- whether the sites are suitable for G/IC uses and should be retained as a pool of undesignated G/IC sites to meet the community needs, having regard to the considerations such as physical setting, historical value (declared monument/graded historic building), in the middle of a G/IC cluster, proximity to recreational uses/tourist attractions, currently being used by non-government organisations for community uses on temporary basis, etc.; and
- whether the sites are within the study area of on-going planning/engineering studies or land use reviews.

II.2 Under the above-mentioned mechanism introduced in October 2011, PlanD serves as the central clearing house to consider suitable alternative uses for VSP “returned” or referred by EDB, while the management agent of VSP is determined by the VSP’s land status. For example, for VSP “returned” by EDB under the central clearing house mechanism with physical possession delivered to the relevant departments, management responsibility of VSP rests with the departments. For VSP located on private land of school sponsoring bodies (“SSBs”), the management responsibility of VSP rests with the relevant SSBs. EDB is responsible for the management of VSP located on sites under Permanent Government Land Allocation (“PGLA”) to EDB, including those which have been “returned” under the central clearing house mechanism but LandsD has requested EDB to continue managing VSP until the next users have been identified and the relevant PGLA are terminated. As far as EDB is concerned, management of the VSP pending re-allocation or “return” under the central clearing house mechanism or those on behalf of LandsD as mentioned above mainly includes security patrol and inspections, pest control, removal of litter, cleansing and weeding.

II.3 The flowchart on the existing mechanism for handling of VSP is at **Annex 2**. For VSP on government land “returned” by EDB, LandsD

has advised that they would handle such premises in accordance the mechanism set out in the flowchart at **Annex 3**. As for the use and disposal of VSP located on private land, we have liaised with LandsD on feasible improvement arrangements with due regard to the relevant land lease conditions. The proposed enhanced mechanisms are presented in the flowchart at **Annex 4**.

- (h) According to paragraph 2.12, IRSD would issue a list of VSP to subject EDB divisions half-yearly for them to make proposals on the use of VSP. How many schools have subject EDB divisions expressed interests on the use of VSP since 2005? How many schools were successfully allocated for use under this mechanism? For VSP included in the list but had not been earmarked by EDB divisions for any use, apart from circulating them half-yearly to EDB divisions, what further actions would IRSD take to promote their use? and**
- (i) What are the factors when EDB divisions assessed the VSP's suitability for their use? Is there any guidelines in this regard? If yes, please provide a copy of the guidelines.**

III.1 In assessing a VSP's suitability for educational use or whether the premises is needed to be re-allocated for school or other educational use, EDB will consider the size, location and physical conditions of the relevant premises. In addition, EDB will also take into account factors like the demand for public sector school places in the district, reprovisioning needs of existing schools especially those in the district and the need to provide diversity in the school system, with a view to meeting various educational needs in the territory and supporting relevant policy initiatives.

III.2 IRSD, on a half-yearly basis, circulates a list of new VSP and VSP not yet earmarked for any use to subject EDB divisions for proposals on educational uses and/or short-term uses (where appropriate), and a list of those VSP with earmarked uses to subject EDB divisions for their advice on the timeline of the proposed uses. Besides, IRSD also identifies suitable VSP for use upon subject EDB divisions' requests from time to time on a need basis. With inputs and updates from subject EDB

****Note by Clerk, PAC: Please see Appendices 32, 33 and 34 of this Report for Annexes 3, 4(a) and 4(b) respectively.***

divisions, IRSD also compiles and circulates, on a half-yearly basis, a list of VSP suitable for short-term use to relevant bureaux/departments (including the Home Affairs Bureau, Home Affairs Department, LandsD, PlanD, and Social Welfare Department) with a view to identifying short-term use pending the deployment of such premises for the designated use. From August 2005 to April 2015, 16 such exercises have been conducted. According to our records, EDB divisions have indicated interest in a total of 106 VSP for school or other educational use during these exercises. Among them, 67 VSP have been re-deployed or re-allocated for school or other educational use and nine are being earmarked for school or other educational use. As at 21 December 2015, one of the remaining VSP has been demolished, one has been deployed for other uses, 26 have been “returned” for consideration on alternative uses under the central clearing house mechanism and two are located on private land (including the one referred to in Case 6 of the Audit Report) and we would consult LandsD about feasible way forward under the relevant land leases (please refer to paragraph VI.1 below).

(j) According to paragraphs 2.14 to 2.17, EDB provided information relating to the use and disposal of VSP to the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) from time to time. However, the information mainly covered primary schools that had ceased operation because of the Consolidation Policy since 2003/04 and did not cover all VSP in the database maintained by IRSD. Has EDB on any occasion disclosed to LegCo or its committees the total number of VSP and/or the use and disposal of VSP? If no, the reasons for not doing so.

IV.1 The data on VSP released to LegCo were first compiled in relation to the questions raised by LegCo concerning the Consolidation Policy in the examination of estimates of expenditure in 2006. In addition, as mentioned in paragraph I.2 above, information on VSP before the implementation of the Consolidation Policy was neither complete nor comprehensive. Hence, for the sake of consistency and in light of the information available, we have been mainly adopting the Consolidation Policy as the framework for preparing subsequent VSP-related replies and information, and have set out the framework adopted clearly in the replies. We have also provided information on VSP outside the

Consolidation Policy upon request every now and then, but with a marker that the data provided might not be comprehensive given the limitations of our database.

(k) According to paragraph 2.22, of the 234 VSP in IRSD’s database, 79 of them had undergone school improvement programme. Four of VSP vacated the premises before completion of improvement works and 22 vacated the premises within five years after. In this connection,

- (i) What were the criteria adopted by EDB in considering and approving schools’ application for the programme?**
- (ii) Why did EDB still approve the school improvement programme for the 26 schools who vacated before or within five years after completing of improvement works?**
- (iii) Please provide the costs of the improvement works for these 26 schools.**

V.1 The School Improvement Programme (“SIP”) was one of the recommendations made in the Education Commission Report No.5 released in 1992. SIP, implemented between 1994 and 2007 in five phases, aimed at progressively upgrading the teaching and learning environment of public sector schools built to old planning standards as far as practicable by providing additional spaces and facilities in order to meet the requirements necessitated by changes in curriculum and teaching approaches then introduced. All government and aided schools built to earlier planning standards were eligible to join SIP. The prioritisation of the improvement projects into different phases was based on various criteria including operational needs, age, size, utilisation, and physical condition of the schools. Unless classified as “SIP non-feasible” in terms of technical feasibility and/or assessed as not cost-effective², a school would be provided upgraded facilities according to the agreed scope of works under the relevant SIP phase. The total costs of the SIP works for these 26 schools were approximately \$380 million.

² A school would be taken as “SIP non-feasible” if there were problems like site constraints, geotechnical issues and limited room for significant improvement to facilities, which made the works either not possible or not cost-effective.

V.2 It is worth noting that generally speaking, an SIP project had to go through several years of planning before commencing the construction. The Government needed to conduct preparation work such as technical feasibility study, design, tenders etc. based on the information available at the time, and would review the actual situation of each project before construction. About 100 schools had withdrawn from SIP due to various reasons including cessation of operation, reprovisioning or in-situ redevelopment of the school, cost ineffectiveness, etc. Nevertheless, since it took time to plan an SIP project, changes in time and circumstances could lead to unforeseen development.

V.3 Under the Consolidation Policy introduced in the 2003/04 school year, public sector primary schools failing to attract the minimum threshold number³ of primary school students would not be allocated primary one class. As a result, some schools which had undergone or were undergoing SIP at that time would subsequently have to cease operation should they fail to meet the enrolment requirement. While striving to adhere to the principle of prudent use of public resources, the bureau at that time was also mindful that it would be unfair to those schools and students should the Government put a halt to the respective SIP works simply because of a possibility of under-enrolment in the future as SIP aimed at improving a school's facilities and in turn learning and teaching environment which did not fully meet the prevailing standard. Moreover, these public sector schools built to the old planning standards were generally less competitive in student admission than newly-built schools. Terminating SIP completely would diminish these schools' capacity of student admission and result in a vicious cycle. In addition, the need of the district as a whole on top of the condition of individual schools, including the need for school premises for whole-day conversion of existing primary schools and reprovisioning of existing schools, was also one of the considerations.

V.4 For the 26 VSP which had subsequently been vacated before or within five years after completion of SIP (including 14 cases which were due to drop in student enrolment), works continued to proceed due to the

³ The minimum threshold number was 23 between the 2003/04 and 2007/08 school year, 21 for the 2008/09 school year and 16 starting from the 2009/10 school year.

considerations set out in paragraph V.3 above, e.g. for whole-day conversion of other primary schools, for reprovisioning, extension or short-term use of other schools, etc. There were also cases where the schools were located in housing estates to be redeveloped but without any definite programme at the time SIP works was being carried out. Under such circumstances, SIP works continued to proceed such that students of the schools would not be deprived of the opportunity to enjoy improved facilities. Besides, some SIP works involved only minor improvement works or were near completion. Terminating the SIP works at that time would not be in the best interests of the schools and the students concerned, or a sensible course of action to take.

V.5 Although the 26 schools had ceased operation shortly before or after undergoing SIP, most of the school premises with improved facilities have been put into other uses afterwards. As at 21 December 2015, among these 26 VSP, 12 of them were deployed for school use, including for whole-day conversion, reprovisioning and extension of existing schools. Two of them were used for setting up time-limited primary schools and two for temporary use by international schools. Four were deployed for post-secondary and other educational uses, one used by a community organisation and one as an EDB office. Among the four remaining VSP, three had been demolished due to redevelopment of the housing estates and one had been “returned” by EDB under the central clearing house mechanism.

- (l) It is EDB’s policy to put VSP to gainful use in the shortest possible time. According to Table 5, there were 29 VSP under EDB’s purview that were not being used. Please explain why it took so long for putting the VSP into gainful use? Does EDB have a timetable of allocating the 29 VSP into gainful use? Would EDB consider setting a target on the vacancy period of the VSP for their optimal utilisation in an expeditious manner?**

- (m) According to paragraph 3.11, EDB has a mechanism in place to ensure that suitable VSP would be put to short-term gainful use as far as practicable. Please provide details of this mechanism. What actions had EDB taken to promote the short-term uses of the 29 VSP?**

- (n) Of the 29 VSP under EDB purview,**
- (i) According to paragraph 3.8 and Table 6, eight VSP not earmarked for any use under EDB’s purview were located on private land. What actions would EDB take on these VSP? Please provide details of these eight VSP, including the address, the land status, whether the lease has a cessation/diminution of user clause which allows the Government to re-enter the site under certain circumstances, costs incurred by the Administration, if any, on managing/maintaining each of the VSP;**
 - (ii) Nine VSP earmarked for mainstream/temporary school use for an average of 3.9 years had not yet been allocated for such uses. What are the justifications for earmarking the VSP for such a long period of time without returning them to the Government for the consideration of alternative uses? Is there any mechanism for monitoring the earmarked VSP to ensure that they are put into gainful use as early as practicable?**
 - (iii) What are the reasons of not putting the remaining 12 VSP into allocated use?**
- (o) According to paragraph 3.22(a), EDB would review the 29 VSP not being used and considered returning VSP not suitable for educational uses to the Government as appropriate. What are the consideration factors when EDB conducts the review? What is the timetable for the review? and**
- (p) At the meeting of Panel of Education held on 11 June 2012, when discussing the item “Use and disposal of vacant school premises”, a Deputy Secretary for Education said that the Administration had stepped up efforts to shorten the lead time required to recycle VSP to within three years. Is “three years” as mentioned a target for the disposal of VSP adopted by EDB? How did the Administration come up with the three-year figure?**

VI.1 We have reviewed the 29 VSP under EDB's purview that were not being used as at 30 April 2015. The latest development as at 21 December 2015 is as follows:

Eight VSP not earmarked for any use

- (i) four VSP located on private land were "returned" under the central clearing house mechanism and PlanD as well as LandsD have been informed accordingly; and
- (ii) for the remaining four VSP located on private land including the one referred to in Case 6 of the Audit Report, we would consult LandsD about feasible way forward under the relevant land leases.

Details are set out in **Annex 5**.

12 VSP allocated and not yet put to use

- (i) One VSP has been used by a primary school as extension since September 2015;
- (ii) Two secondary schools have used a VSP as a shared extension since June 2015;
- (iii) One VSP has been used by a primary school for whole-day conversion since September 2015;
- (iv) Three time-limited primary schools have commenced operation at three VSP since September 2015;
- (v) One VSP has been used as an EDB office since November 2015; and
- (vi) One VSP was handed over to an international school operator in November 2015 following the execution of a tenancy agreement.

For VSP allocated by EDB, there are uncontrollable or unforeseeable factors such as local concerns which may affect the use of some VSP. In addition, timetable for the related renovation or building works would depend on various factors including readiness of the projects and funding priorities. Nevertheless, EDB would closely monitor the follow-up

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Please see Appendix 31 of this Report for Annex 5.*

actions to avoid unnecessary delay in putting an allocated VSP to use as far as practicable. Among the four remaining VSP in question, one is located on private land and the SSB has applied to LandsD to deploy the VSP for operating kindergarten with EDB's policy support.

Nine VSP earmarked by EDB for educational use

We would continue to exercise stringent control by regularly reviewing the need to retain VSP for educational use and the schedule of use. The School Allocation Exercise of one of the VSP in question would be arranged soon. It is worth noting that to cater for expected or projected increase in demand in future, we need to earmark/reserve sites and VSP for school use (e.g. primary, secondary, special and international schools) for some time before proceeding with the allocation or releasing them in case it is confirmed that the site/VSP is no longer required. There is also a need to keep some VSP in hand to cater for uncertainties about the actual demand arising from parental choices and fluctuation of student population. Allocating three VSP in 2014 for use as time-limited primary schools from the 2015/16 school year to meet the transient increase in demand for primary school places in recent years was an example. For VSP located on Government land with identified long-term school or other educational use but would, for the time being, be available for short-term use, EDB would follow the existing practice to internally review possible short-term uses of these VSP and to invite relevant government bureaux and departments, including organisations under their purview to consider suitable VSP for short-term use on a regular basis (i.e. the mechanism as explained in paragraph III.2 above).

VI.2 As explained in paragraphs III.1 and VI.1 above, EDB would take into account a basket of factors when assessing the possible educational use of a VSP, and there is a need to retain some VSP to cater for the demand in future and the uncertainties involved. While EDB strives to facilitate the utilisation of VSP in an expeditious manner, it is not practicable to impose a fixed target on the vacancy period of a VSP. For example, demand for public sector primary school places is highly dependent on the district-based student population and is subject to changes and uncertainties due to parental choices and limitations of the projections. VSP allows the setting up of time-limited aided primary

schools in a timely manner, which is one of the flexible measures to meet the transient increase in demand. To cater for different educational needs, in particular in the long run, it is essential for EDB to keep a reserve of earmarked VSP. Setting a fixed target of vacancy period arbitrarily may also result in returning VSP in haste and compromising the flexibility required for meeting changing demand and various needs including reprovisioning of existing schools for improved learning and teaching environment or decanting of existing schools to facilitate in-situ redevelopment. To fully utilise the land resources, EDB would continue the existing practice to internally review possible short-term uses of VSP earmarked by EDB located on Government land, and inform relevant government bureaux and departments and invite them (including organisations under their purview) to consider VSP for short-term use on a regular basis.

- (q) Total cost incurred on the maintenance and management of VSP not allocated for any use in the past 10 years, with the number of VSP involved and a breakdown by year. Please provide details of the management of the VSP which is graded as a historical building, including the name and location of the VSP; and**
- (r) Measures taken by EDB for the management and maintenance of VSP to prevent illegal break-in or trespassing.**

VII.1 As mentioned in paragraph II.2 above, EDB is responsible for the management of VSP located on sites under PGLA to EDB, including those “returned” under the central clearing house mechanism but that LandsD has requested EDB to continue the management until the next users have been identified and the relevant PGLA are terminated. As far as EDB is concerned, management of the VSP concerned mainly includes security patrol and inspections, pest control, removal of litter, cleansing and weeding. Such VSP management services have been provided since 2007 on a daily, weekly or bi-weekly basis, depending on EDB’s assessment of the need, value and condition of the VSP concerned, as well as the cost involved. The total cost incurred since then has been about \$5.796 million and the breakdown is as follows:

Year	Management cost (\$ (rounded to nearest \$'000)	Number of vacant school premises included in that year
2007	277,000	11
2008	572,000	13
2009	468,000	12
2010	370,000	10
2011	676,000	13
2012	764,000	10
2013	747,000	15
2014	868,000	14
2015	1,054,000	13

VII.2 Among the vacant school premises managed by EDB, one VSP was classified as a Grade 1 Historic Building⁴ by the Antiquities Advisory Board in 2010. The VSP was used by another school as decanting premises from 2008 to July 2014. After the decanting use ended in July 2014, we have provided it with 24-hour property management services based on the advice from the Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”). Routine management services as mentioned in paragraph VII.1 above were provided to this premises with due care to avoid causing disturbance or damage to the historic fabrics and structures thereon and thereof as per AMO’s advice. If there are any works to be done to the premises, we would provide AMO with the detailed works proposal for comments before commencement of the works.

VII.3 During the above-mentioned period, on top of the routine management services, housekeeping services such as reinstatement of wire fencing have also been carried out for sake of security. Should there be break-in cases, the responsible property management services company would report to the Police for investigation. EDB has also required the responsible property management services company to step up management services of those VSP with reported break-in cases. EDB has also requested the Police to step up patrol in the vicinity of such VSP.

⁴ According to the Antiquities Advisory Board, Grade 1 Historic Buildings is defined as buildings of outstanding merit, which every effort should be made to preserve, if possible.

- (s) **Information relating to school sponsoring bodies which have applied for new or vacant school premises in the past 10 years, including name of the school, type of education provided (i.e. primary, secondary, special education, international school), the year of application, size and location of the school, number of students, land status of the premises and the result of the applications.**

VIII.1 Information on allocation of new sites/premises and/or vacant school premises to school sponsoring bodies/applicants through School Allocation Exercises since 2005 is at **Annex 6**.

- (u) **Information relating to cessation of school operation because of the Consolidation Policy implemented in 2003/04, including name of the school that ceased operation, type of education provided, size and location of the school and number of classes and students before cessation, with a breakdown by year.**

IX.1 Information relating to schools which ceased operation under the Consolidation Policy since its implementation in the 2003/04 school year is at **Annex 7**.

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Annexes 6 and 7 not attached.**

Existing mechanism for handling vacant school premises

