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Panel on Economic Development
Meeting on 21 July 2017

**Background brief on the reprovisioning of
the General Post Office Building**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the reprovisioning of the General Post Office ("GPO") Building. It also summarizes the views and concerns expressed by Members on relevant matters in previous discussions.

Background

2. The GPO Building, commissioned in 1976, is located at Connaught Place, Central. It is an eight-storey building providing accommodations for the GPO (counters, post office boxes and delivery office), Speedpost Section and the Hongkong Post ("HKP")'s Headquarters and various divisions. According to the Director of Audit's Report No. 65 issued in October 2015, the Government started planning for the relocation of the GPO Building as early as in May 1985 after the expiry of a lease condition that restricted the height of the GPO site. In the Director of Audit's Report No. 31 issued in October 1998, the Audit Commission reported on the Government's slow progress in the redevelopment of the GPO site to maximize its development potential.

3. In the 2014 Policy Address, the Government announced that it would launch the development of Site 3 ("Site 3") under the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront ("UDS") as soon as possible to increase the floor area of office and retail space in the core business district. Site 3 is one of the eight key sites covered in UDS. In order for Site 3 to be developed in accordance with the recommendations in UDS, the GPO Building located at the southern part of Site 3 has to be reprovisioned.

4. The work related to the reprovisioning of the GPO Building is being taken forward by HKP. As advised by the Administration in May 2017, the reprovisioning of the GPO Building comprises two parts, viz. reprovisioning of the district-tied facilities (i.e. the GPO Counter Office and the Post Office Box Section, the GPO Delivery Office, and the Speedpost Section) in the future development of Site 3 to meet the postal needs of the local community, and reprovisioning of HKP's Headquarters to a government site adjacent to the Central Mail Centre in Kowloon Bay. Consultation on the necessary reprovisioning works was conducted with the Central and Western District Council and the Kwun Tong District Council on 20 October and 1 November 2016 respectively. The Administration will submit the necessary funding application to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration and Finance Committee for approval.

The Public Accounts Committee's discussions

5. In October 2015, the Audit Commission released its report on the operation of HKP which also covered the reprovisioning of the GPO Building. Following the release of the Audit Report, the Public Accounts Committee ("PAC") held two public hearings to follow up on the related matters and published its report in February 2016. Regarding the reprovisioning of the GPO Building, PAC expressed concern that some 30 years had lapsed since the Government started planning for the relocation of the GPO Building and the site had yet to be developed. Members were also concerned about the progress of the reprovisioning exercise of the GPO Building. PAC noted that the Audit Commission had recommended, among other things, that the Postmaster General of HKP should, in collaboration with the relevant government bureaux/departments, take appropriate measures to facilitate the Government's project for the reprovisioning of the GPO Building.

6. In response, the Administration advised that the reprovisioning of the GPO Building would be taken forward in step with the future development of Site 3 on the New Central Harbourfront. HKP had been working closely with the relevant bureaux/departments to make its best endeavor to take forward the tasks falling within its purview in a timely manner according to the established public works procedures. An updated progress report of follow-up actions taken by HKP as at 24 May 2017 is in **Appendix I**.

Council question

7. At the Council meeting on 2 November 2016, Hon Tanya CHAN raised a question relating to the development of Site 3 and the reprovisioning of the

GPO Building. Hyperlink to the Council question and the Administration's response are provided in **Appendix II**.

Latest development

8. The Administration will consult the Panel on Economic Development on the proposed project on reprovisioning of HKP's Headquarters in the existing GPO Building to a Government, Institution or Community site at Wang Chin Street, Kowloon Bay at the meeting on 21 July 2017.

Relevant papers

9. A list of relevant papers which are available on the Legislative Council Website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>) is in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
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**Updated progress of follow-up actions taken
by the Hongkong Post**

Para. No.	Audit's/PAC's Recommendations	Progress to date
Part 5: Management of Central Mail Centre and General Post Office Building		
Para. 5.20(a) of the Audit Report	PMG should, in collaboration with the relevant government B/Ds, take appropriate measures to facilitate the Government's project for the reprovisioning of the GPO Building.	<p>The reprovisioning of the GPO Building will be taken forward in step with the future development of "Site 3" on the New Central Harbourfront. The reprovisioning comprises two parts, viz. reprovisioning of the district-tied facilities and the HKP's Headquarters. The district-tied facilities (i.e. the GPO Counter Office and the Post Office Box Section, the GPO Delivery Office, and the Speedpost Section) will be reprovisioned in the future development of Site 3 to meet the postal needs of the local community. HKP Headquarters will be reprovisioned to a government site adjacent to the Central Mail Centre (CMC) in Kowloon Bay.</p> <p>In support of future development of Site 3 in accordance with the recommendations of the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront, HKP has all along been working closely with the relevant B/Ds, and has been making its best endeavour to take forward those tasks falling within its purview in a timely manner in accordance with the established public works procedures. Consultation on the necessary reprovisioning works was conducted with the Central and Western District Council and the Kwun Tong District Council on 20 October and 1 November 2016 respectively. We will submit the necessary funding application to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration and the Finance Committee for approval.</p>

Source: Enclosure 9 to the Government Minute in response to the Report of the Public Accounts Committee No.67 and No.67A of February 2017 and April 2017

List of relevant papers

Issued by	Meeting date/ Issue date	Paper
Public Accounts Committee	17 February 2016	Public Accounts Committee Report No. 65 (Chapter 4 of Part 8)
	25 May 2016	Government minute
	24 May 2017	Government minute
Finance Committee	31 March 2017 (Session No.2)	Administration's replies (Question Serial No. 0164)
Council Meeting	2 November 2016	Council question on "Development of Site 3 of the new Central Harbourfront" raised by Hon Tanya CHAN