

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

**Minutes of the 18th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Tuesday, 9 April 2019, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)

Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Deputy Chairman)

Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP

Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP

Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP

Hon Claudia MO

Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP

Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP

Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP

Hon CHAN Chi-chuen

Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP

Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP

Hon Alvin YEUNG

Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Hon HO Kai-ming

Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding

Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH

Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP

Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH

Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai

Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

Members absent:

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon HUI Chi-fung

Public officers attending:

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| Mr Raistlin LAU Chun, JP | Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³ |
| Mr LAM Sai-hung, JP | Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) |
| Ms Doris HO Pui-ling, JP | Deputy Secretary (Planning & Lands) ¹ Development Bureau |
| Mr Elvis AU Wai-kwong, JP | Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1) |
| Ms Margaret HSIA Mai-chi | Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works) |

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| Mr Kevin YEUNG Yun-hung, JP | Secretary for Education |
| Mrs Elina CHAN | Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Infrastructure and Research Support) |
| Ms Winnie HO Wing-yin, JP | Deputy Director of Architectural Services |
| Ms Maria TSANG Pui-shan | Chief Project Manager 102 Architectural Services Department |
| Mr Bill WONG Kwok-piu | Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) ³ |
| Mr LAI Cheuk-ho | Project Manager (North) North Development Office Civil Engineering and Development Department |
| Mr Zorro YUEN Tat-yung | Chief Engineer (North) (Special Duties) ² North Development Office Civil Engineering and Development Department |
| Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP | Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation |
| Mr Peter MA Wai-chung | Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Agriculture) (Acting) |

Clerk in attendance:

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| Mr Derek LO | Chief Council Secretary (1) ⁵ |
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Staff in attendance:

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| Ms Anki NG | Council Secretary (1) ⁵ |
| Ms Michelle NIEN | Legislative Assistant (1) ⁵ |
| Ms Christy YAU | Legislative Assistant (1) ⁸ |
| Ms Clara LO | Legislative Assistant (1) ⁹ |

Action

The Chairman advised that there were seven funding proposals on the agenda for the meeting. The first to fifth proposals were items carried over from the previous meeting, while the sixth and seventh proposals were new submissions from the Administration. The seven funding proposals involved a total funding allocation of \$47,570.8 million. He reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP") of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests relating to the funding proposals under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the proposals. He also drew members' attention to Rule 84 of RoP on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

Head 703 – Buildings

PWSC(2018-19)42 272ES A 30-classroom secondary school at Site KT2e, Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal sought to upgrade 272ES to Category A at an estimated cost of \$434.8 million in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices. The Subcommittee had commenced deliberation on the funding submission at the meeting on 29 March 2019. The deliberation now continued.

Policy on building or reprovisioning school premises

3. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether the Administration had formulated a holistic policy having regard to the projected local population and the completion schedule of public housing estates before deciding to build the secondary school premises at the Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong, for the reprovisioning of Maryknoll Secondary School ("MSS"). He also urged the Administration to build schools first so as to tie in with the scheduled completion of public housing estates and establish the practice of "schools come before housing estates".

4. Secretary for Education ("SED") said that the Government had a clear policy on the building of public sector schools. In view of the scarcity and importance of land resources, when planning large-scale residential developments, the Government reserved sites for school development in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines having regard to the planned population intake and needs for community services. Planning of primary schools was district-based. The overall supply of school places and population projection in the district would

be considered in deciding whether new schools should be built. On the other hand, the planning of secondary schools and the decision as to whether new schools should be built were territory-based due to the higher mobility of secondary students. Unlike large-scale housing estate developments in new areas where the demand for school places should have been known in advance, the decision as to whether a new school should be built or an existing school should be reprovisioned on a site available in an old area would hinge on both the supply of school places and the population projection of that area. A new school might need to be built should the projected student population exceed the supply of school places, whereas reprovisioning of an existing school might be pursued should the projected student population not exceed the supply of school places.

5. SED added that an early decision might not be possible as a wrong decision might not be conducive to the steady development of the school sector in the area or the efficient use of resources. The Education Bureau ("EDB"), having taken into account the various factors under the established mechanism, considered it unnecessary to build a new secondary school in Kwun Tong District. The school allocation exercise ("SAE") was therefore commenced in 2014 and a new set of school premises, which was an improvement over the existing one, was allocated to MSS for reprovisioning purpose in accordance with the current established process of school allocation. Furthermore, EDB planned the supply of school places in public sector secondary schools on the basis of the overall conditions in Hong Kong and would give due consideration to the needs of various districts in allocating the school places.

Land use of the vacated school site

6. Mr Tony TSE expressed support for the proposed project. Referring to paragraph 8 of [PWSC\(2018-19\)42](#), he enquired whether the Administration had a comprehensive plan on the use of the site vacated by MSS after its removal from the existing premises. Ms Claudia MO also enquired whether EDB had decided to reallocate the vacant premises for school or other educational uses. Given that the tasks such as tendering of the works contract took time, Mr TSE urged the Administration to expedite the decision on the use of the vacated school site. Mr LUK Chung-hung and Mr AU Nok-hin urged the Administration to consult expeditiously local stakeholders on the use of the vacated school site.

7. SED replied that as the new school premises of MSS were scheduled for completion in around 2022, EDB had about three years to consider the use of the to-be-vacated premises. As the structure of the old school was school premises, priority would be given to school or other educational uses

(e.g. reprovisioning of primary schools, especially those operating in "match-box style" premises). He further said that whether the to-be-vacated premises would be used for education purposes could not be decided at this stage. The timetable of the proposed project would be finalized after the funding proposal had been approved by the Finance Committee ("FC"). If it was confirmed that the to-be-vacated premises were no longer required for school uses (e.g. for temporary usage for schools undergoing redevelopment), EDB would inform the Planning Department and other relevant departments (e.g. the Lands Department) as soon as possible for consideration of suitable alternative long-term uses.

Works supervision and consultants

8. Referring to paragraph 9 of [PWSC\(2018-19\)42](#), Mr Tony TSE noted that the consultants' fees for contract administration for the proposed project amounted to just about \$1.5 million. He enquired whether the Architectural Services Department ("ArchSD") would undertake the supervision of the proposed project, and sought explanation of the details of the consultants' fees.

9. SED replied that ArchSD was responsible for supervising the proposed project. Deputy Director of Architectural Services ("DDArchS") supplemented that as ArchSD undertook the design and supervision of the entire project, the consultants' fees for contract administration was minimal. Consultants fees were incurred for geotechnical advisory service, use of the new Building Information Modeling ("BIM") technology, and BEAM Plus assessment.

10. Referring to paragraph 4 of LC Paper No. PWSC167/18-19(01) on the work of EDB's works consultants, Ms Claudia MO enquired about the scope of duties of the consultants and the minor internal conversion works they would undertake, and whether the noise generated from the works would cause disturbances to teaching and learning at the school. She also enquired about the use of the temporary special rooms.

11. SED replied that taking into account the experience gained from the improvement works for "matchbox-style school premises", EDB was preparing to conduct minor internal conversions, including the repartitioning of rooms and installation of moveable partition walls, at other school premises constructed according to past planning standards to facilitate the more flexible use of the existing space by the schools. "Temporary special room" generally referred to rooms that could be used flexibly for various purposes (e.g. counselling), and could be adjusted in area with partition walls, etc., to suit activities with varied space requirements. EDB engaged works

consultants on contract terms in accordance with the relevant requirements. The scope of duties of the consultants covered the major repair, emergency repair and minor internal conversion works of the school premises. The implementation of the improvement works required coordination with the school. For works that were relatively complicated/would give rise to noise nuisance, arrangement had to be made for them to be carried out during long school holidays, so as to minimize the impact on the day-to-day operation of the school.

Size, facilities and design of the new school premises

12. Mr Tony TSE said that according to his understanding, the difference between the standard sizes of a secondary school and a primary school, which were about 6 900 square metres and 6 200 square metres respectively, was only about 700 square metres. He enquired whether the Administration would consider converting the school premises of MSS into a primary school in terms of design after the relocation, and about the factors to be considered. As the site area of the new school premises was 7 500 square metres whereas the site area of the old school premises was 2 800 square metres, he also enquired how the additional space would be used, say, whether the number of student enrollment would be increased.

13. SED replied that built in 1966, the existing premises of MSS conformed to the standards at the time of construction, while the reprovisioned premises were built in accordance with prevailing standards. After the reprovisioning, MSS would have its facilities and teaching and learning environment all upgraded. As for student enrollment, MSS, which currently operated 24 classes, might operate up to 30 classes and hence enroll about 200 more students after the relocation. After completion of the new school premises, EDB would determine whether there was a need to increase student enrollment having regard to the supply and demand of school places in the district.

14. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired whether there was any established policy which required the provision of parking spaces at school premises and the number concerned; the respective numbers of parking spaces provided at the existing premises and those to be provided at the new premises of MSS; and their location in the layout plan.

15. SED replied that according to the prevailing standards of school design, the reprovisioned new school premises would have one school bus lay-by, six private car and taxi lay-bys and eight private car parking spaces. There were parking spaces at the existing premises of MSS, and information on their number would be provided in due course. DDArchS supplemented

that as shown in the ground floor plan at Sheet 1 of Enclosure 2 to [PWSC\(2018-19\)42](#), the parking spaces at the new school premises were next to the emergency vehicular access. The numbers of parking spaces and lay-bys were provided in accordance with the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines of the Planning Department and endorsed by the Transport Department.

16. At the request of Mr CHAN Chi-chuen, the Administration would provide information on the number of parking spaces within the existing school premises of MSS, and whether there was any difference from the number of parking spaces to be provided at the new school premises at the Development at Anderson Road, Kwun Tong, upon reprovisioning in future.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC189/18-19\(01\)](#) on 30 April 2019.)

17. Referring to the ground floor plan of the school at Sheet 1 of Enclosure 2 to [PWSC\(2018-19\)42](#), Dr CHENG Chung-tai enquired whether the running track at the new school premises of MSS was a standard provision facility and about its length given that two basketball courts had already been provided. He also enquired about the use of the tuck shop-cum-central portioning area as shown in the third floor plan of the school at Sheet 4 of Enclosure 2, and whether the caretakers' quarters in the new school premises could be retrofitted with air-conditioners as and where necessary.

18. SED replied that while the two basketball courts were standard facilities of present-day secondary schools, the running track was not part of the standard provision. The provision of running tracks for schools would depend on space availability, need, merits and design compatibility. The running track concerned would be 78 metres long. The design of the new school premises was finalized after rounds of discussion between the school management and EDB taking into account the school's long-term needs. Newly-built schools were generally provided with central portioning areas for implementation of on-campus central lunch portioning. As an environmentally friendly practice, food was apportioned according to students' needs during lunch time before being delivered to classrooms and more environmentally friendly tableware was used. The caretakers' quarters were not part of the teaching and learning facilities and thus would not be provided with air-conditioners by the Government. Subject to engineering compatibility, the Government might consider allowing the school to install air-conditioners on its own initiative. However, the school management should undertake the relevant works and the cost as well.

19. Mr HO Kai-ming said that the new school premises of MSS were located near the On Tai Estate Ancillary Facilities Block, and there was also a shortfall of parking spaces in On Tai Estate. He enquired whether the Administration would consider providing underground car parks at other new schools, if any, to be built near On Tai Estate in future under the "single site, multiple use" principle, so as to optimize the use of the underground space and minimize wastage of resources.

20. SED replied that the Government might consider Mr HO Kai-ming's suggestion when building new schools in future. However, other more complicated issues, such as the management of the car parks, would need to be resolved. The suggestion might not be readily adopted in new school building projects for which the design work was underway given that delay might be caused to the design and construction progress. EDB would first consider the feasibility of the suggestion from a policy perspective and explore whether support from other relevant bureaux could be obtained.

Furniture and equipment at the new school premises

21. Mr AU Nok-hin said that the cost of furniture and equipment ("F&E") in previous school projects, such as those in Queen's Hill, Fanling, and Shui Chuen O, Sha Tin, was to be borne by the school sponsoring bodies ("SSBs"). He enquired why the F&E cost in the proposed school project was borne by the Government, and whether there was any established policy in this regard. He also enquired whether MSS would reuse its existing F&E items after moving to the new school premises. As some schools had expressed difficulties in procurement following EDB's F&E reference lists, he also urged EDB to review the lists in a timely manner.

22. SED replied that under the prevailing mechanism, the Government was responsible for the F&E cost for reprovisioning/redevelopment projects of existing schools, while that for a newly set up school was borne by the SSB concerned. In school relocation projects, the Government would encourage SSBs and the school management to reuse F&E items in order to comply with the principles of protecting the environment and putting resources to proper use. EDB had put in place a relatively simple procedure to meet school-based teaching and learning needs, under which schools were allowed to procure F&E items not on the reference lists provided that they put on the procurement list that the procurement was justified by operational needs and in line with the cost-effective principle.

Transport support facilities for the new school premises

23. While expressing support for the proposed project, Mr HO Kai-ming was concerned about the transport support facilities to be provided for the new school premises of MSS. As the new school premises were located on a hill in Kowloon Bay near On Tai Estate which was currently not directly accessible from Kwun Tong by any means of public transport, he enquired about the public transport support facilities (including public buses) to be provided to facilitate the commute of students in future. Mr AU Nok-hin also suggested the provision of suitable transport support facilities to connect the new school premises at the Development at Anderson Road and the transportation hubs in Kwun Tong in order to facilitate the commute of students.

24. SED replied that currently, residents of the two public housing estates on Anderson Road could travel to and from Kwun Tong by public transport. Students attending school at the new school premises in future might also use these means of public transport. There were also public bus routes connecting Kowloon Bay and On Tai Estate. After completion of the new school premises, it was believed that a relatively large proportion of students attending the school were living in the neighbourhood. EDB would relay members' concerns to the Transport Department.

Reasons for delay in completion of school premises

25. Mr CHU Hoi-dick said that according to the result of the Fourth SAE 2014, the reprovisioned school premises of MSS should be completed in tandem with that of another primary school in end-2018. While construction of the primary school was nearly completed by now, the new school premises of MSS would not be completed until around end-2022. He enquired about the reasons for the delayed completion of the new school premises of MSS, and the measures the Administration had in place to ensure that new schools allocated under SAEs could be completed as scheduled.

26. SED replied that currently, an SSB had to meet certain basic eligibility requirements for allocation of reprovisioned school premises under SAEs. Among other things, it should be incorporated under the Companies Ordinance or other ordinances and exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance. Moreover, the SSB should operate more than one secondary schools in Hong Kong. In this regard, MSS had spent about one year on revising its Memorandum of Association in order to comply with the relevant requirements. Another reason for the longer time required to complete the advance preparation work for the new school premises was the extra time taken, as compared to that of the primary school,

by MSS and the Administration to discuss the architectural design of the premises for it to cope with the long-term needs and development of the school. A wide range of views were put forward by the relevant stakeholders. The school principal also explained the reasons for the delayed completion of the new school premises when discussing the school building project with the local District Council.

Implications of school reprovisioning on students

27. Ms Claudia MO enquired about the implications of the reprovisioning of MSS on students participating in Secondary School Places Allocation. SED replied that secondary school places were allocated on the basis of the 18 administrative districts of Hong Kong. MSS still fell within Kwun Tong District after its relocation. There would not be any direct implications on students regarding their choice of school nets and school place allocation.

28. At 9:19 am, there being no further questions from members on the item, the Chairman put the item to vote.

29. All nine members present and voting were in favour of the item, and the item was endorsed. The Chairman consulted members on whether the item would require separate voting at the relevant FC meeting. No member made such a request.

Head 707 – New Towns and Urban Area Development

PWSC(2018-19)43 471RO The Establishment of an Agricultural Park in Kwu Tung South

30. The Chairman advised that the proposal sought to upgrade part of 471RO to Category A at an estimated cost of \$176.6 million in MOD prices. The Government had consulted the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the proposed works of the Agricultural Park ("Agri-Park") Phase 1 on 8 January 2019. Panel members had no objection to the submission of the funding proposal to the Subcommittee for consideration. A gist of the Panel's discussion was tabled at the meeting.

Project cost, works details and progress

31. Ms Claudia MO said that some information, which was alleged to be commercial secrets and sensitive in nature, had been redacted earlier from the report of the Engineering Feasibility Study for the Establishment of an Agricultural Park—Feasibility study ("the Agri-Park study"). Moreover, the funding submission for the proposed project ([PWSC\(2018-19\)43](#)) lacked

detailed information on the Agri-Park Phase 1. She enquired about the contents and details of the whole Agri-Park project, including, among other things, its operation, project costs, and whether the report of the Agri-Park study could be disclosed in full.

32. Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation ("DAFC") replied that some information had been redacted as its disclosure was considered inappropriate when the study of the Agri-Park project was still underway. Project Manager (North), North Development Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department ("PM(N)/CEDD"), supplemented that the full report of the Agri-Park study was uploaded on the CEDD website in end-2018 upon the implementation of the proposal of the Agri-Park Phase 1. The Agri-Park Phase 2 was still at the designing stage and its project scope was being reviewed. The Government would first sum up the experience gained from the Agri-Park Phase 1, and then enhance the design of the Agri-Park Phase 2. For that reason, an accurate estimate of the cost of the whole Agri-Park project was not available at this stage.

33. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether the cost of the proposed project covered the infrastructural works for the Agri-Park Phase 1. Mr LUK Chung-hung said that the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions supported the proposed project in principle. Mr AU and Mr LUK enquired about the completion time of the soil analysis, study and design of the Agri-Park Phase 2. DAFC replied that the cost of the proposed project covered the infrastructural works for the Agri-Park Phase 1. The soil analysis, study and design of the Agri-Park Phase 2 would take about one to two years to complete.

34. Mr LAU Kwok-fan said that as far as he knew, the terms and conditions (including rental) offered initially by the Administration regarding the farmland, basic lodging facilities and storage facilities in the Agri-Park, which were acceptable to the farmers affected by the Northeast New Territories ("NENT") development, would attract farmers to move into the Agri-Park. Pointing out that the planning and development of the areas surrounding the Agri-Park Phase 1 were not yet finalized, he enquired why the Administration proceeded with the advance works of Phase 2 before knowing the effectiveness of the Agri-Park Phase 1; whether the completion time of the Agri-Park Phase 1 could tie in with the schedule of the land resumption exercise in NENT; and so far, how many farmers had indicated their interest in moving into the Agri-Park.

35. DAFC replied that it was necessary to proceed with the advance planning of the Agri-Park Phase 2 when implementing the Agri-Park Phase 1 given the need to conduct detailed studies and consultation on various aspects

of the project (e.g. project design). The whole Agri-Park covered about 80 hectares of land among which about 11 hectares were occupied by Agri-Park Phase 1. As the Agri-Park Phase 2 was much larger than the Agri-Park Phase 1, it took time to examine in detail the outstanding issues, planning design and transport support, etc.. The Government would review the outstanding issues and areas of improvement in Phase 1. The experience gained would serve as reference for the design of Phase 2.

36. DAFC added that given the present situation, the Agri-Park Phase 1 should be able to be completed in tandem with the NENT development. The exact number of farmers who had indicated their interest in moving into the Agri-Park was not available at this stage. However, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AFCD"), together with the Development Bureau, would maintain communication and liaison with affected farmers.

Supply of water sources

37. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired how the Administration would ensure the adequacy of infrastructural facilities (including the supply of water sources) in the Agri-Park Phase 1. Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Agriculture) ("AD(A)/AFCD"), replied that the consultant had explored different solutions regarding the sources of irrigation water in the Agri-Park, including using the Kwu Tung Irrigation Reservoir and rivers nearby and building suitable water storage facilities, so as to ensure the adequate supply of irrigation water for the future tenants of the Agri-Park Phase 1 to carry out their farming activities. The Government would also consider using alternative water sources (including harvesting rainwater and use of raw water for irrigation in emergency situations), encourage farmers to adopt the more water-saving and efficient irrigation method with the use of sprinklers, and arrange technical support and seminars to facilitate farmers' adoption of the relevant irrigation system. Initial contact and discussion with farmers revealed that the irrigation system was generally accepted by these farmers. The Government believed that the current arrangement for water sources and irrigation could meet the farming needs of farmers while facilitating sustainable agricultural development.

Temporary lodging units and storage units

38. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired about the annual rental for renting the basic lodging and storage units in the Agri-Park Phase 1 according to the Administration's initial estimate; when the actual rental level would be determined; and whether the rental for the Agri-Park Phase 2 would be similar to that of Phase 1.

39. DAFC replied that the basic lodging units and storage units provided by the Agri-Park would be managed by AFCD, while maintenance would be provided by other departments (including the Architectural Services Department and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department). The preliminary plan was to determine the rental charge having regard to the recurrent expenditure of the facilities. The annual rental for a temporary lodging unit which measured about 15 square metres should not exceed \$5,000, and that for a storage unit should not exceed \$3,000. The actual rental had to take into account the cost of the whole project and the maintenance cost of those facilities. The rental for the relevant facilities in the Agri-Park Phase 2 would be set based on principles similar to those adopted in Phase 1, subject to the prevailing expenses of the Agri-Park project. Significant variations were not anticipated.

40. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen enquired—

- (a) of the cost of associated park facilities amounting to \$35.7 million as set out under paragraph 9(c) of [PWSC\(2018-19\)43](#), about the amount to be used for the construction of lodging and storage facilities, and the locations of those facilities;
- (b) about the basic equipment to be provided at the temporary lodging units, and the conditions of use;
- (c) when the Administration would commence the construction of the permanent lodging units in the Agri-Park Phase 2, and why such facilities would only be provided in Phase 2; and
- (d) whether strict requirements would be imposed on the time of stay of the farmers in the lodging units of the Agri-Park and their use.

41. DAFC and PM(N)/CEDD replied that—

- (a) in addition to the basic lodging and storage units, the associated park facilities also included ponds for storing irrigation water and water supply facilities, as well as paths between fields, etc.;
- (b) the basic lodging units were likely to be located at the end of the road shown in Enclosure 1 to [PWSC\(2018-19\)43](#). About 10 rows of structures made of pre-fabricated components (e.g. cargo containers) would be used as temporary lodgings for

farmers. Each row of structure would have two storeys and each storey would provide two lodging units. With four lodging units in each row, 10 rows would provide a total of 40 lodging units. Basic sanitary facilities (e.g. toilets, showers, etc.) and simple cooking equipment would be included;

- (c) as a preliminary idea, each tenant of the Agri-Park Phase 1 would be allotted one temporary lodging unit under the tenancy agreement if his/her farm had a production area of not less than three *dau chung* (斗種), so that the farmers concerned would have a place for temporary rest and use the unit for other purposes related to their farming operation when necessary. Depending on their needs, farmers might decide how long they would stay in the lodging facilities having regard to their own needs. However, those facilities were not meant for long-term residential purpose;
- (d) as for the storage facilities, each tenant should be allotted a storage unit near his/her farm under the tenancy agreement for storage of farming equipment or fertilizers, etc.; and
- (e) the Government would review the usage of the lodging facilities in the Agri-Park Phase 1 after their launch, and would introduce enhancement in Phase 2 in respect of the number, distribution, arrangement, etc. of the facilities.

Feasibility of a living-cum-farming lifestyle

42. Mr CHU Hoi-dick and Dr CHENG Chung-tai urged the Administration to preserve the living-cum-farming lifestyle of farmers by allowing them to reside in the Agri-Park to take care of their crops. Mr Gary FAN said that the livelihood of farmers practising conventional farming might be affected if modern technological farming which was not operated under the living-cum-farming model was to be introduced to the Agri-Park as planned.

43. Dr CHENG Chung-tai enquired whether the Administration had considered if the transportation facilities of the Agri-Park could meet the needs of farmers who delivered their produce to the market for sale early in the morning every day, and whether the security facilities, manpower and law and order in the Agri-Park could ensure the safety of the crops and farms in emergency conditions (e.g. sudden change of weather) should the living-cum-farming lifestyle not be preserved. He was concerned that

farmers would have difficulties in managing their farms if a living-cum-farming lifestyle could not be pursued.

44. DAFC replied that farmers generally harvested their crops early in the morning, and several models were adopted for the sale of produce. Farmers who were members of co-operative societies would deliver their produce to a nearby vegetable station, from where the produce was delivered in lots by the co-operative societies to the wholesale markets of the Vegetable Marketing Organization. Farmers might also deliver their own produce to morning bazaars or other retail outlets, work with non-profit-making organizations, or sell their produce on online platforms. The future Agri-Park required the support of a transport network for transporting agricultural machinery and produce on a day-to-day basis. Space would also be reserved in the Agri-Park in future for tenants to organize programmes and activities such as weekend farmers' markets to promote their produce. At present, farmers generally had made arrangements for delivering their produce to vegetable stations, wholesale vegetable markets or retail outlets. It was believed that similar arrangements would be put in place when they commenced their farming operation in the Agri-Park in future. The Government had not yet made an estimate of the number of security staff required for the Agri-Park. However, the Agri-Park would be managed by AFCD, which would make appropriate security arrangements. The provision of lodging facilities in the Agri-Park would also allow farmers to deal with issues relating to the operation of their farms.

45. AD(A)/AFCD supplemented that farmers usually delivered harvested vegetables to vegetable stations or morning bazaars, etc., in the early hours in the morning. The temporary lodging facilities could support the operation needs of farmers in delivering their produce to these sale channels. Moreover, the storage facilities could also support the day-to-day needs of farmers in their farm operation.

46. Mr CHU Hoi-dick remarked that the Administration did not accept the views of affected farmers in taking forward the Agri-Park development, including their views on the irrigation arrangement. He was given to know that neither the Agri-Park, the Long Valley Nature Park, nor the special agricultural land rehabilitation arrangement for NENT was accepted by farmers as the Administration refused to let farmers preserve their current living-cum-farming lifestyle. Under the existing policy, the Lands Department issued a licence to farmers who owned private agricultural land for them to erect an on-farm domestic structure so that they could maintain a living-cum-farming lifestyle. Farmers who did not own any private agricultural land would be compelled to move their farming operation into the Agri-Park and operate farms away from their homes. Farmers affected

by the NENT and Agri-Park developments opined that they should be allowed to preserve their living-cum-farming lifestyle. He enquired whether the Administration would consider preserving the lifestyle in the Agri-Park.

47. DAFC replied that the concept and arrangements behind the Agri-Park project had all along adhered to the principle of "making the best use of land". Except for infrastructural facilities, land in the Agri-Park would be used for farming purpose as far as possible. In view of the possible need of farmers to tend to their farms, the Government had developed basic lodging facilities in the Agri-Park to facilitate their farming activities.

48. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that by providing public housing units to rehouse the farmers affected by the NENT and Agri-Park developments on the one hand and building temporary lodging units in the Agri-Park on the other, the Administration was in effect causing a wastage of housing resources. Farmers would end up residing in the Agri-Park and use the public housing units for storage, which led to resource wastage. By preserving the living-cum-farming lifestyle and increasing the size of the temporary lodging units to rehouse the affected farmers to the Agri-Park, the public housing units could be released and allocated to other applicants on the waiting list. He enquired whether the Administration would increase the size of the temporary lodging units, which measured about 160 square feet each.

49. DAFC replied that the temporary lodging units in the Agri-Park provided a temporary resting place for farmers and workers so that they could stay close to their farms to take care of their crops when necessary, but were not meant for long-term residential purpose. The size of these units could meet the farming needs of farmers. Deputy Secretary (Planning & Lands)1, Development Bureau, supplemented that public housing was a scarce public resource. The Government's policy sought to assist eligible farmers in moving into public housing so as to meet their housing need. The lodging facilities in the Agri-Park served the sole purpose of supporting farming operation, and there was hardly any room to increase their size. Apart from the lodging units which each measured about 160 square feet, the Agri-Park also provided storage units with an area of about 80 square feet for farm storage purpose.

50. Referring to paragraph 7 of LC Paper No. [PWSC171/18-19\(01\)](#), Ms Claudia MO enquired about the differences between the temporary lodging units to be provided in the Agri-Park Phase 1 and the permanent units to be provided in Phase 2. DAFC replied that the temporary lodging units in the Agri-Park Phase 1 were a temporary facility, while the lodging units in

Phase 2 would be provided on a permanent basis. The lodging facilities in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 were restricted to uses related to farming operation and were not meant for residential purpose. The Government would review the size, indoor faculties, distribution, etc., of the lodging facilities in Phase 1 and consider if there was room for improvement in Phase 2 development.

51. Mr LUK Chung-hung enquired how the Administration assessed the number and floor area per person of the temporary lodging units required in the Agri-Park Phase 1. Mr KWONG Chun-yu enquired whether the Administration could increase the number of temporary lodging units. DAFC replied that the Agri-Park Phase 1 currently provided about 7 hectares of arable farmland. Given that about 30 to 40 farmers were expected to move into the Agri-Park Phase 1 and the principle under which each tenant should be allotted one unit, it was estimated that about 40 temporary lodging units would be required. The Government did not preclude the possibility of fine-tuning the number of the lodging units should such a need arise in the later stages of development.

Environmental protection facilities

52. Mr Gary FAN noted that the Administration would look into preserving the existing ecosystem of the Agri-Park, including its microclimate, water sources and soil. He enquired about the Administration's measures to control the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the Agri-Park, and the suggested use of food waste. DAFC replied that AFCD would encourage organic farming that would not use chemical-containing pesticides at suitable locations in the Agri-Park. It would also monitor and offer guidance to farms practising conventional farming regarding the correct use of pesticides in order to comply with the relevant legislation. For the sake of promoting environmentally-friendly farming, the Government would encourage the use of food waste and green waste (including leaves, branches and weed plants) to make compost. Moreover, the Government would also provide more environmentally-friendly solutions such as communal composting facilities, etc. in the Agri-Park to encourage farmers to use compost to enrich their soil.

53. Mr LUK Chung-hung enquired whether conservation facilities would be provided near the Agri-Park to protect the water sources, air quality and the environment so as to prevent pollution, and the measures the Government had in place to deal with any polluting projects being carried out near the Agri-Park. DAFC replied that AFCD would undertake the management of the Agri-Park. Tenants setting up farms in the Agri-Park would enjoy a stable environment for farming and development. The Government would not allow activities which were not intended for farming purpose in the

Agri-Park. The Agri-Park was surrounded by villages and farmland, and any polluting activities being carried out in the vicinity would be dealt with under the established mechanisms.

Farming activities

54. Mr Gary FAN noted that the Agri-Park would help nurture agro-technology and knowledge on modern farm management through leasing farmland and providing associated agricultural facilities for farmers to conduct commercial farming. He said that some community groups and farmers were concerned if the Administration would introduce production methods such as hydroponics or agro-technology to the Agri-Park, resulting in the admission of farms operating with higher thresholds into the Agri-Park which would affect smaller farms or farmers practising conventional farming. He enquired—

- (a) whether the introduction of agro-technology and modern technological farming to the Agri-Park would raise the threshold and affect the operation and livelihood of conventional farmers;
- (b) about the modern technological farms to be introduced to the Agri-Park and the ratio of such farms to conventional ones; and
- (c) whether the Administration would make it mandatory for farmers to adopt the modern farming and management modes proposed to be introduced to the Agri-Park.

55. DAFC replied that—

- (a) the Agri-Park sought to develop new agricultural technologies and promote modern farm management. In demarcating the farmland in the Agri-Park, consideration would be given to the microclimate, soil condition and water sources of each plot before the suitable farming mode could be determined. The Government would study and resolve the issues related to the microclimate, soil and water sources in the Agri-Park. Quality agricultural land would be used for soil-based farming, whereas plots with soil conditions unsuitable for outdoor farming would be used for modern technological farming or infrastructural facilities. Moreover, the Government intended to set up an organic farming area in the upstream area of the water sources, which provided a better shelter from the

pollution caused by other farming activities. Other types of farming activities included conventional farming and farming using modern technologies (e.g. hydroponics);

- (b) modern management could also be applied to conventional farming. The Government would encourage farmers to use agricultural machinery, set up greenhouses and rain shelters and adopt automatic irrigation system, etc.. To enhance their production capacity, farmers would also be encouraged to apply suitable fertilizers more scientifically and would be provided with assistance and technical support for the use of modern technologies and agricultural machinery in their farming activities;
- (c) most of the agricultural land with rehabilitation possibility in the Agri-Park Phase 1 would be leased to affected farmers, and the remaining agricultural land would be mainly used for resuming conventional farming activities. The estimated ratio of technological to conventional farms in the Agri-Park Phase 1 was not yet available. About ten-odd farmers were affected by the Agri-Park Phase 1 project, and arrangement would be made for all of them to set up their farms in the Agri-Park Phase 1. As far as the Government understood, all these farmers practised conventional farming. The conventional farming mode was expected to remain dominant in future; and
- (d) farmers affected by the Agri-Park or other government projects and moving into the Agri-Park would be granted a tenancy agreement for them to continue with their farming activities in the Agri-Park as long as they were willing to accept the tenancy terms. They could also maintain their existing mode of farming. The Government would encourage, not mandate, farmers to adopt modern farming technologies, machinery and mode of management.

56. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether hydroponics must be introduced to the Agri-Park Phases 1 and 2, and whether hydroponic farming would ruin the quality agricultural land in Chiu Keng Tsuen.

57. DAFC replied that the consultant was examining the specific scope of the Agri-Park Phase 2, as well as its topography, soil quality and water sources. The Agri-Park was aimed at introducing the more advanced technologies to support various farming modes, including hydroponics.

Hydroponic farming could be carried out either in a controlled environment (e.g. an enclosed environment in an industrial building) or by harnessing the natural light, a method more suitable for outdoor farmland in general. The Government would not sacrifice the quality agricultural land resources in the Agri-Park to pursue vertical or controlled environment hydroponics. The specific planning and design of the Agri-Park Phase 2 would depend on the relevant topography, soil quality and water sources, as well as the modes of farming adopted.

Farm development

58. Mr AU Nok-hin said that the Administration provided four types of farmland in the Agri-Park Phase 1 by demarcating areas for conventional, organic, modern technological farming and floriculture. He enquired about the distribution and size of the farmland. He also enquired about the Administration's measures to protect and enhance the competitiveness of local produce. DAFC replied that locally-grown vegetable brands had good reputation. In particular, the organic and good quality ones fetched prices even higher than those of imported produce. The Government would discuss with farmers on ways to further promote the produce grown in the Agri-Park.

59. Mr KWONG Chun-yu enquired whether the Administration knew if the condition, soil quality and water source distribution of the some 50 hectares of fallow farmland in the Agri-Park were suitable for rehabilitation, and if the farmland had been occupied illegally. DAFC replied that preliminary studies were conducted during the site selection process for the Agri-Park project. It was estimated that the 50 hectares of fallow farmland was suitable for rehabilitation. The study conducted for the Agri-Park Phase 2 would include more soil surveys and analyses and would take a more in-depth look into the suitable modes of farming. Preliminary information available to the Government indicated that most of the 50 hectares of fallow farmland had been laid idle. As the farmland was for farming purposes in the first place, land rehabilitation only required making slight improvement to the soil quality.

Farmland rental and allocation

60. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired how the rental for the farmland in the Agri-Park Phase 1 was determined. DAFC replied that in setting the rent of the farmland in the Agri-Park, the median of current rents for crop farms in the vicinity (including Sheung Shui, Kwu Tung South, Fanling, etc.) had been used as preliminary reference. It was estimated that the median rent for farmland in the area was about \$1,000 per *dau chung* (斗種) per year.

61. Mr LUK Chung-hung enquired about the criteria to be adopted in allocating and leasing the farmland in the Agri-Park Phase 1, and how the tenancy agreements would be renewed in future. DAFC replied that after accommodating the farmers affected by the Agri-Park Phase 1 and other concurrent land development projects of the Government, the remaining farmland, if any, in the Agri-Park would also be open for application. As for the vetting criteria, it would depend on whether the applicant's overall farming plan would contribute to agricultural development. In future, the Government would also set up a committee comprising non-Government members to advise the Government on the Agri-Park. The Government decided initially that each tenancy agreement of the Agri-Park would cover a period of five years and would be renewable, subject to relevant requirements. Such requirements included the continuous implementation of the farming plan and production targets agreed upon by both parties. Tenancy would normally be renewed as long as the farmers met the requirements.

62. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would continue to discuss this item at the next meeting. The meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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