

A. Introduction

The Audit Commission ("Audit") conducted a review to examine the Administration's work in planning, provision and management of public parking spaces with a view to identifying areas for improvement. A related review was conducted in October 1999.¹

2. Hon SHIU Ka-fai declared that he was a non-official member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA").

Background

3. In Hong Kong, the Government adopts a transport policy based on public transport (including railways, trams, buses, minibuses, taxis and ferries) with railways as the backbone. Every day, over 12 million passenger trips are made through different public transport services, which account for over 90% of the total passenger trips, while less than 10% of the total passenger trips are made through private cars. As at 31 December 2018, there were about 784 400 licensed vehicles, including 565 800 private cars, 54 900 motorcycles and 123 600 commercial vehicles.²

4. Under the policy directives of the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB"), the Transport Department ("TD") is responsible for parking-related matters for licensed vehicles. According to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and

¹ The issue on the management of on-street parking spaces and parking facilities was published in the Director of Audit's Report No. 33 of October 1999 and the Public Accounts Committee's conclusions and recommendations made in respect of the subject were published in its Report No. 33 in February 2000.

² According to the Transport Department, regarding parking needs, commercial vehicles included light goods vehicles ("LGVs"), medium goods vehicles, heavy goods vehicles, coaches and non-franchised public buses, but excluded van-type LGVs as they might also be parked at parking spaces for private cars. Other licensed vehicles totalling 40 100 comprised: (a) 18 150 taxis which generally operated on the road round the clock and their parking demand was mainly for short duration stay; and (b) 6 150 franchised buses, 4 300 public light buses, 3 350 private light buses, 1 750 special purpose vehicles and 6 400 government vehicles, most of which were parked at depots, bus stops within public transport termini as well as stands.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

Guidelines ("HKPSG"),³ parking spaces in a development are generally divided into ancillary parking spaces (restricted to owners and authorized users) and public parking spaces (for use by the general public). Public parking spaces are mainly provided through: (a) incorporation of parking spaces in private, public housing and Government, Institution or Community ("G/IC") developments,⁴ and open space projects; (b) short-term tenancy ("STT") car parks administered by the Lands Department ("LandsD"); and (c) government multi-storey car parks and on-street parking spaces managed by TD.

5. As at 31 December 2018, 756 909 parking spaces (including 238 320 public parking spaces) were provided to meet the parking needs of 744 191 licensed private cars, commercial vehicles and motorcycles. In 2018, the revenue from 11 government multi-storey car parks and metered parking spaces amounted to \$220 million and \$287 million respectively.

6. The Committee held two public hearings on 10 and 31 May 2019 to receive evidence on the findings and observations of the Director of Audit's Report ("Audit Report").⁵

The Committee's Report

7. The Committee's Report sets out the evidence gathered from witnesses. The Report is divided into the following parts:

- Introduction (Part A) (paragraphs 1 to 11);
- Planning and provision of public parking spaces (Part B) (paragraphs 12 to 36);

³ HKPSG is a Government manual of criteria for determining the scale and locational requirements of various land uses and facilities. According to the Planning Department, it is responsible for coordinating the compilation of HKPSG, and government bureaux and departments will from time to time formulate/review their planning standards and guidelines in HKPSG, taking into account their policies and requirements.

⁴ G/IC development is intended primarily for the provision of G/IC facilities serving the needs of the local residents and/or a wider district, region or the territories. It is also intended to provide land for use directly related to or in support of the work of the Government, organizations providing social services to meet community needs, and other institutional establishments.

⁵ A third public hearing originally scheduled for 17 July 2019 had been cancelled as the Legislative Council Complex was not available for meeting. The Committee then decided that the Administration should be requested to reply to the Committee's written questions.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- Management of government multi-storey car parks (Part C) (paragraphs 37 to 60);
- Management of on-street parking spaces (Part D) (paragraphs 61 to 87);
- Implementation of parking-related technology initiatives (Part E) (paragraphs 88 to 109); and
- Conclusions and recommendations (Part F) (paragraphs 110 to 112).

Speech by Director of Audit

8. **Mr John CHU Nai-cheung, Director of Audit**, gave a brief account of the Audit Report at the beginning of the Committee's public hearing held on 10 May 2019. The full text of his speech is in *Appendix 4*.

Opening statement by Secretary for Transport and Housing

9. **Mr Frank CHAN Fan, Secretary for Transport and Housing**, made an opening statement at the beginning of the Committee's public hearing held on 10 May 2019, the summary of which is as follows:

- given that the Government's transport policy was based on public transport with railways as the backbone, and not to attract passengers to opt for private cars in lieu of public transport, the Administration had not set any specific targets for the provision of parking spaces;
- THB and TD would adopt in an orderly manner a series of short and medium to long-term measures to suitably increase the number of parking spaces in accordance with the "Single Site, Multiple Uses" principle. TD would also proactively take forward the automated parking system ("APS");⁶ and

⁶ An APS (also known as intelligent or mechanical parking system) can increase the number of vehicles to be parked in a given footprint through stacking up vehicles in a compact manner by mechanical lifting/sliding or autonomous manoeuvring devices.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- TD had since February 2019 taken measure to expedite the handling of abandoned vehicles at government multi-storey car parks to ensure effective utilization of their parking spaces. TD would also continue to drive "Smart Mobility" through taking forward technology initiatives, such as the installation of new generation of parking meters starting from mid 2020 with the provision of real-time parking data and further enhancements to the dissemination of parking vacancy information to motorists.

The full text of Secretary for Transport and Housing's opening statement is in *Appendix 5*.

10. With reference to Table 1 in paragraph 1.9 of the Audit Report about 9 220 public parking spaces in G/IC developments as at 31 December 2018, the Committee asked whether TD could discuss with the relevant government departments the possibility of extending the operating hours of G/IC facilities in order to increase the availability of their public parking spaces.

11. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** replied in his two letters dated 9 May 2019 and 25 July 2019 (*Appendices 6* and *7* respectively) that:

- the public parking spaces in G/IC developments were mainly parking spaces in government buildings, parks, sports facilities, markets, educational institutions and hospitals that were provided for use by the general public. The operating hours of the premises would vary depending on the services provided by the facilities and the contract terms of the car park operators; and
- TD would actively follow up with the relevant government departments on the proposed extension of operating hours of the concerned G/IC facilities and work towards incorporating related provisions into new management contracts for car parks as soon as possible so as to increase the availability period of these parking spaces.

B. Planning and provision of public parking spaces

12. According to paragraph 2.3 of the Audit Report, TD projected that, based on the increasing trend in the number of private cars, the number of parking spaces to vehicles ("parking space ratio") would further drop to less than 1 in the coming years.

The Committee enquired about the parking space ratios in the coming three years with the projected change in the number of public car parking spaces.

13. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*) that:

- as at end December 2018, the number of private cars (inclusive of van-type light goods vehicles ("LGVs"))⁷ was 616 220, whereas the number of parking spaces available for private cars was 675 264. The ratio was about 1.10;
- as at the first quarter of 2019, the annual growth rate of licensed private cars over the past 12 months was about 2%. Based on this growth trend, the estimated numbers of private cars in the next three years would be about 628 500, 641 100 and 653 900 respectively;
- from 2016 to 2018, the average growth rate of private car parking space provision was about 1.3% per annum. Should this trend continue and assuming the aforesaid car growth rate, the related parking space ratio would drop by about 0.01 per year in the next three years; and
- TD had not compiled specific projection on the future supply of public parking spaces for private cars as the provision of new parking spaces was contingent on the results of district consultation and progress of individual development projects.

14. Noting from Figure 1 in paragraph 2.3 of the Audit Report that the parking space ratio for commercial vehicles had been hovering around 0.65 in the past five years, the Committee asked whether there was a target set for this ratio and whether the above parking space ratio indicated a shortage in parking spaces for commercial vehicles, and also about the Administration's efforts in achieving the policy objective of according priority to considering and meeting the parking demand of commercial vehicles in the provision of parking spaces.

⁷ See Note 2 to paragraph 3.

15. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** said at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that:

- the parking space ratio of around 0.65 suggested a shortage in parking spaces for commercial vehicles. However, since some commercial vehicles operated round-the-clock, operated and parked in the Mainland, or parked at non-designated parking spaces (including brownfield sites in the New Territories), the actual shortage should be less serious;
- the Administration did not set a target parking space ratio for commercial vehicles. Given the limited land resources in Hong Kong and the competing priorities for different land uses, it would not be practicable for the Administration to pursue a rigid target;
- TD was taking forward a consultancy study on parking for commercial vehicles for completion by end 2019. The study would establish a parking demand model for projecting the demand for and supply of parking spaces for commercial vehicles in all districts up to 2031 with a view to devising short to long-term measures to address the anticipated demand; and
- the Administration had been pursuing various measures to increase the supply of parking spaces for commercial vehicles as follows:
 - (a) designating suitable on-street locations as night-time parking spaces;
 - (b) requiring developers to provide parking spaces at the higher end of the parking standards under HKPSG for new developments;
 - (c) encouraging parking of student service vehicles within school premises after school hours;
 - (d) providing on-street parking spaces and picking up/setting down facilities for coaches; and
 - (e) specifying in the tenancy agreements of suitable STT car parks a minimum number of parking spaces to be reserved for commercial vehicles.

16. At the request of the Committee, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) a table setting out the expected increase in the supply of parking spaces totalling 9 849 as a result of the Administration's short, medium and long-term measures and the implementation timetable for each of these measures.

17. With reference to Table 2 in paragraph 2.4 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought the distribution between hourly charged parking spaces which would be available to meet short-term parking needs, and monthly charged parking spaces for each of the following types of public parking spaces: G/IC developments, public housing developments, private developments, government multi-storey car parks and STT car parks.

18. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*) the distribution between hourly charged parking spaces and monthly charged parking spaces of the 11 government car parks under TD's purview. TD did not have information about such distribution of parking spaces in other types of car parks.

19. On the Committee's enquiry about the mechanism/measures put in place by the Administration to ensure the reasonable distribution of hourly charged and monthly charged parking spaces in private developments, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** responded in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*) that the Administration did not regulate the distribution of hourly charged and monthly charged parking spaces of car parks in private developments, which was a matter for the market to determine.

20. The Committee noted from paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the Audit Report that according to the Second Parking Demand Study Final Report issued by TD in November 2002 ("2002 Study Report"), there were surplus parking facilities for private cars up to 2011. Subsequently, in 2003 and 2014, the parking space standards of HKPSG for private housing developments were substantially revised, resulting in a reduction in the number of such parking spaces. The Committee was, however, concerned that since 2006 there had been a significant increase in the number of private cars, which resulted in the private car parking space ratio decreasing to 1.10 in 2018 and further to a projected ratio of less than 1 in the coming years. The Committee thus queried the justifications in revising HKPSG in

2014 to further reduce the provision of parking spaces despite the increasing number of private cars.

21. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** explained at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that:

- HKPSG were revised in February 2014 taking into account the results of a consultancy study on "Review of Parking Standards for Private Housing Developments in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines"; and
- under the aforesaid study, parking surveys covering 127 private housing developments with 32 654 private car parking spaces were conducted in 2009. The surveys revealed that there was over-provision of parking spaces for small and medium-sized flats (i.e. gross floor area of less than 100 square metres), but a shortfall for large flats (i.e. gross floor area of not less than 100 square metres). Upon completion of the study in mid 2012 and after due consultation with relevant government departments and stakeholders, the parking requirements in HKPSG were revised in February 2014 to adjust downwards the private car parking standards for small and medium-sized flats and upwards for large flats.

22. At the request of the Committee, **Director of Planning** provided in his letter dated 21 May 2019 (*Appendix 9*) a copy of parking-related standards in HKPSG and details of the revisions made to HKPSG since 2003 concerning parking-related standards.

23. In response to the Committee's enquiry about the Administration's view on the need to control the growth of private cars and the measures that had been/would be taken in this respect, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that the Transport Advisory Committee ("TAC")⁸ published in December 2014 its Report on

⁸ TAC's function is to advise the Chief Executive-in-Council on broad issues of transport policy with a view to improving the movement of both people and freight. Its membership comprises 16 non-official members (including the chairman) and three ex-officio members (i.e. the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) or his representative, the Commissioner for Transport and the Commissioner of Police or his representative).

Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong⁹ with 12 recommended short, medium and long-term measures to tackle traffic congestion. Although the year-on-year growth in the number of private cars had slightly eased recently, it was still a main contributory factor to road congestion and could not be ignored. The Administration would continue to closely monitor the situation and progressively take forward the recommendations of TAC.

24. The Committee noted from Case 1 in paragraph 2.12 of the Audit Report that the proposed project scope of the Town Park in Areas 66 and 68 in Tseung Kwan O ("TKO") was supported by the Sai Kung District Council in March 2011, but TD only proposed to split the Town Park project into two separate projects in November 2018, namely a Town Park project in TKO Area 68 by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") as the project proponent and a Town Park with an underground car park project in TKO Area 66 (providing 395 parking spaces) by TD as the project proponent. The Committee was concerned why TD only proposed to incorporate an underground car park into the open space project until some seven years after the Sai Kung District Council had supported the project scope in 2011. The Committee enquired about the actions taken by TD from March 2011 up to June 2017 when TD found that there would be a shortfall of 472 parking spaces upon the termination of an STT car park in TKO Area 66.

25. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** explained at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that although TKO Areas 66 and 68 were earmarked for the proposed Town Park, TD was not aware of any concrete development timetable for the project until January 2017 when the project was announced in the 2017 Policy Address as one of the 26 projects of sports and recreation facilities to be launched in the following five years. Before January 2017, as the subject site had been used as an STT public car park since February 2013, TD had been monitoring the utilization of the STT car park and keeping in view any concrete programme for the Town Park project that might impact on the continued operation of the STT public car park.

26. On the Committee's enquiry about TD's actions in response to Audit's comments on TD's inadequacies in planning stated in paragraph 3 of Case 1, **Ms Mable CHAN, Commissioner for Transport**, said at the public hearings and

⁹ Report on Study of Road Traffic Congestion in Hong Kong (accessed on 5 November 2019): https://www.thb.gov.hk/eng/boards/transport/land/Full_Eng_C_cover.pdf

Secretary for Transport and Housing supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that:

- as STT sites were meant for temporary use before resumption for long-term developments, TD would critically review the demand for parking spaces in planning the reprovisioning of STT car parks in future, taking into account the programme of long-term developments, local traffic conditions, land availability, utilization of car parks nearby, illegal parking in the vicinity and views of stakeholders;
- TD would, in line with the principle of "Single Site, Multiple Uses", work closely with the project proponents at the early stage of the long-term developments to explore the feasibility of reprovisioning of parking spaces in situ as part of the developments as far as practicable. Based on this principle and the parking demand in the area, TD had, upon the Administration's announcement of the planning timetable of the Town Park project, proposed the provision of public car parking spaces in the project to meet local parking needs; and
- TD was studying the provision of additional parking spaces in the Joint User Government Office Building in TKO Area 67 on top of the committed 105 parking spaces as well as other projects in the vicinity with a view to mitigating the shortfall of parking spaces in the area.

27. At the request of the Committee, **Ms Michelle LI Mei-sheung, Director of Leisure and Cultural Services**, provided in her letter dated 27 May 2019 (*Appendix 10*) a chronology of actions taken by LCSD for the Town Park project. The Committee noted from her letter that the progress of new public parking spaces under the principle of "Single Site, Multiple Uses" in G/IC developments would largely hinge on the coordination among the relevant departments concerned as well as the support of the local communities. In this regard, the Committee asked whether THB/TD had considered putting in place any measures/mechanism to facilitate better coordination among government bureaux/departments concerned and solicit the support of the local community so that the public parking spaces could be made available to the public as soon as possible.

28. **Commissioner for Transport** responded at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- TD had been monitoring the parking demand of TKO, and would identify suitable government sites or facilities in the district for the provision of public car parks under the principle of "Single Site, Multiple Uses" so as to optimize the use of the sites;
- if the provision of public car parks was considered necessary, TD would liaise with the government departments concerned during the planning stage of the relevant projects, and request the provision of public car parks under the projects; and
- the Administration was revising internal guidelines to the effect that all government departments were required to consult TD on the need to provide public car parks during the early stage of project planning, such as when devising the major facilities of the projects, and to conduct technical and traffic impact assessments as appropriate. TD would also issue internal guidelines on the provision of public parking spaces in proposed new development and redevelopment projects.

29. With reference to paragraph 2.13 of the Audit Report, the Committee enquired about TD's efforts in monitoring the utilization rate of the lorry park in the private development in Case 2 and the latest position on the utilization of the LGV parking spaces.

30. **Commissioner for Transport** advised at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*) that TD had been monitoring the utilization of the subject car park with 155 LGV parking spaces by site surveys. In the site survey conducted in April 2019, TD observed that about 50 LGVs were parked in the car park. TD also kept track of the local parking demand from LGVs through surveys on illegal parking situation covering the area within 500 metres from the car park concerned. It was found that around 120 LGVs were illegally parked, suggesting that the LGV parking demand in the locality was comparable to the number of LGV parking spaces provided in the car park.

31. For Case 2, the Committee also expressed concern about LandsD's handling of the non-compliance issue found in the inspection of October 2016 to the subject car park where its ingress and egress points were blocked by movable railings. The Committee questioned why LandsD had not issued warning letter to the owner of the

private development concerned when it noted similar non-compliance during its inspection of October 2017.

32. **Mr Thomas CHAN Chung-ching, Director of Lands**, explained at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 24 May 2019 (*Appendix 11*) that:

- according to file records, it was due to an oversight that no warning letter had been issued in respect of the breach in lease conditions after the annual site inspection of October 2017. LandsD took immediate follow-up actions with site inspection conducted on 16 May 2018 when an enquiry about Case 2 was received.¹⁰ As the same breach in lease conditions still persisted as revealed from site inspection, a warning letter was issued to the lot owner on 25 May 2018 requiring rectification of the breach within 14 days;
- the car park operator replied on 29 May 2018 informing that the breach was rectified with metal fences at the car park entrance removed. Another site inspection conducted by LandsD on 31 May 2018 confirmed that the concerned metal fences were removed and the breach was considered rectified; and
- LandsD issued emails in August and October 2018 to remind District Lands Offices to monitor and check compliance of lease conditions and to take follow-up actions in accordance with the prevailing guidelines. To reinforce the message and as a further reminder, LandsD issued a memo in May 2019 consolidating previous guidelines given in August and October 2018.

At the request of the Committee, **Director of Lands** provided in his above letter the latest guidelines promulgated in May 2019 for the handling of cases relating to non-compliance of lease conditions and follow-up actions in respect of rectified cases.

¹⁰ In mid May 2018, in processing a planning application of a new development nearby, the Planning Department sought advice from LandsD on the provision of the public lorry park in the subject private development from land administration aspect.

33. With reference to Case 3 in paragraph 2.13 of the Audit Report, the Committee enquired about the actions that could be taken by LandsD against the private lot owner's failure to make rectification in respect of the occupation of LGV parking spaces by private cars despite repeated issuance of warning letters to the lot owner concerned by LandsD.

34. **Director of Lands** advised at the public hearings and supplemented in his letter dated 24 May 2019 (*Appendix 11*) that:

- when a breach of lease conditions warranting lease enforcement actions was detected and confirmed, LandsD would take lease enforcement action according to the established procedures by issuing warning letters to the lot owner requesting rectification of the breach, the failure to comply with which might lead to registration of the warning letters in the Land Registry, with reservation of the rights to take further appropriate lease enforcement action which might include taking re-entry action in accordance with the lease terms and under the Government Rights (Re-entry and Vesting Remedies) Ordinance (Cap. 126); and
- in response to LandsD's warning letters, the lot owner in Case 3 had taken positive actions against the improper parking by private cars, including erecting directional signs to guide the car park users and warning notices of taking impounding actions. According to the lot owner, there were genuine difficulties in enforcement which were beyond his control as individual private car drivers often ignored the warning notices and parked their private cars in the spaces designated for goods vehicles.

35. Noting the aforesaid difficulties encountered by the lot owner in managing LGV parking spaces, the Committee asked about the measures that could be taken by LandsD or other government departments to facilitate the owner's compliance with the relevant lease condition which required the owner to provide a specified number of public parking spaces for certain types of vehicles.

36. **Director of Lands** added in his letter dated 19 June 2019 (*Appendix 12*) that:

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- LandsD would continue to remind the owner of the obligation to comply with the relevant conditions, and recommend the owner to consider taking appropriate management measures to this end, such as mounting clear and suitable warning signs at parking spaces, and clamping private vehicles that had wrongly parked in spaces marked for LGVs;
- if the owner could show that the parking demand for LGVs in the area concerned was low, subject to the advice and agreement of TD, LandsD might consider an application from the owner to convert the parking spaces for use by private vehicles either on a short-term or permanent basis with a view to putting the parking spaces to their optimal uses; and
- LandsD would also explore with TD measures to make information on public vehicle parking spaces more widely accessible to the public. This might include publishing information of public vehicle parking spaces (such as type of car parking spaces, real-time parking space availability, etc.) including but not limited to those operated by private owners under lease through the GeoInfo Map, a public online map service provided by LandsD, as well as the GeoData Store, a portal for the public and application developers to search and access geospatial data.

C. Management of government multi-storey car parks

37. With reference to paragraphs 3.15 to 3.18 of the Audit Report, the rooftop of Kwai Fong Car Park¹¹ had been closed since the completion of its security installation works in October 2013 and since then all the 75 parking spaces on the rooftop had not been open for public use. According to TD, the surface of the rooftop of the car park was found not suitable for parking and was thus closed pending repair works. Upon liaising with the Architectural Services Department ("ArchSD"), the repair works were completed in October 2018. The rooftop of the car park was subsequently re-opened for temporary use as a vehicle detention centre since April 2019. The Committee requested the Administration to provide a

¹¹ Kwai Fong Car Park is a seven-storey car park providing 645 parking spaces, including 552 parking spaces for private cars, van-type LGVs and taxis, and 93 parking spaces for motorcycles. According to the floor plans of Kwai Fong Car Park, 477 parking spaces for private cars, van-type LGVs and taxis are located on 1st to 7th floors of the car park and the remaining 75 parking spaces for private cars, van-type LGVs and taxis are located on the rooftop of the car park.

chronology of key actions taken in respect of the rooftop parking spaces between October 2013 and April 2019, and to advise when the rooftop parking spaces would be re-opened for general parking purpose.

38. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided the chronology in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*), and **Commissioner for Transport** added in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that TD would review the need for the vehicle detention centre and examine the feasibility of opening part of the roof for car parking purpose, while continuing to reserve the remaining part for vehicle detention purpose. TD aimed to complete the review by end 2019.

39. According to the letter from Secretary for Transport and Housing dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*), TD discussed with ArchSD the re-roofing works of Kwai Fong Car Park at a site meeting held on 8 July 2014. However, instead of re-roofing works, only water seepage maintenance works were conducted on the roof. The water seepage problem at the rooftop of the car park had not yet been fully addressed. The Committee further asked about the conclusions reached at the above site meeting.

40. **Commissioner for Transport** advised at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that TD was aware of the serious water leakage problem at the rooftop of the car park as early as October 2013 when the security enhancement works were completed. TD thus considered that the rooftop was temporarily not suitable for parking and was in need of massive re-roofing works. A chronology of key events in respect of the repair works for the car park rooftop from October 2013 to July 2014 was provided in the above letter.

41. **Mrs Sylvia LAM YU Ka-wai, Director of Architectural Services**, replied at the public hearing and supplemented in her letter dated 19 June 2019 (*Appendix 14*) that:

- on 31 October 2013 and at TD's invitation, ArchSD's consultant briefed and shared views with TD on the proposed scope of Kwai Fong Car Park Refurbishment Project. The Refurbishment Project included barrier-free-access works and re-roofing works proposed by the consultant, who indicated that the roof had leaked seriously and had caused concrete spalling;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- the meeting held on 8 July 2014 was only a preliminary preparatory meeting at which the programme of site works had not yet been established, and detailed arrangement was yet to be discussed. As Kwai Fong Car Park had not been re-roofed since it was constructed, ArchSD agreed to include the re-roofing works in the project scope as preventive maintenance works having regard to the consultant's recommendation and the water seepage problem reported by TD; and
- due to the age of the car park and the fact that it was not built by ArchSD, the details of the existing roof construction had to be verified in situ before commencing the re-roofing works. The verification, however, revealed that the original design and construction of the waterproofing layer in the rooftop of the car park was extremely rare, and would make the re-roofing works more difficult and complicated. The replacement of the existing waterproofing layer might affect the overall structural stability. As such, the re-roofing works were subsequently omitted from the original plan. After careful consideration, ArchSD decided to adopt another maintenance method (localized epoxy injection) which was relatively economical and pragmatic for the car park.

42. In reply to the Committee's enquiry, **Director of Architectural Services** provided in her letter dated 19 June 2019 (*Appendix 14*) the details of general maintenance works and roof water seepage maintenance works on the 7th floor and rooftop of Kwai Fong Car Park arranged by ArchSD from 2014 to 2018, including the scope of and expenditure incurred for each of these maintenance and repair works. The roof water seepage works (including localized epoxy injection) carried out to the car park from 2014 to 2018 amounted to \$179,156.

43. According to the letter from Director of Architectural Services dated 19 June 2019 (*Appendix 14*), ArchSD advised TD on 19 November 2015 that the technical constraints for re-roofing works had been overcome, but the re-roofing works would only be initiated if the situation warranted. The Committee enquired about the circumstances under which the complete re-roofing works would be considered given that the repair and maintenance works carried out by ArchSD so far failed to address the water seepage problem of the car park effectively. The Committee enquired about the estimated cost to be incurred by such complete re-roofing works.

44. **Director of Architectural Services** replied in her letter dated 17 September 2019 (*Appendix 15*) that:

- the repair and maintenance works by way of localized epoxy injection carried out to the car park was generally effective in addressing the water seepage problem, and the situation of water seepage from the roof had improved. This repair method was much more economical and would cause less disturbance than complete re-roofing; and
- ArchSD would consider complete re-roofing works if the water seepage problem had become so extensive that it could not be effectively and economically addressed by localized epoxy injection. The estimated cost of complete re-roofing was about \$3.5 million.

45. Noting from the letter of Director of Architectural Services dated 19 June 2019 (*Appendix 14*) that the maintenance works carried out to Kwai Fong Car Park (mainly concrete repairs to the ceiling of the 7th floor) between November 2015 and October 2018 did not affect the opening of its rooftop for car parking, the Committee asked why TD did not re-open the rooftop parking spaces for public use during the aforesaid period.

46. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- TD was advised on 19 November 2015 that ArchSD had sorted out the technical constraints and designed a new re-roofing system. However, given that the re-roofing works would incur higher construction cost, it would not be carried out within 2015. ArchSD further indicated that it was attempting to sort out the funding issue and would keep TD informed of the progress in due course;
- notwithstanding that the repair and maintenance works by way of localized epoxy injection was being carried out to Kwai Fong Car Park from 2015 to 2018, spalling concrete had been found at the ceiling soffit with water seepage at various locations of the ceiling on the 7th floor. Whilst the 7th floor of the car park was handed over by ArchSD to TD in January 2016 upon completion of the repair works and was opened in February 2016, water seepage problems emerged, rendering the need to close the affected car parking spaces for repair works;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- noting that the re-roofing works had yet to be completed and in order to avoid the haphazard operation of the car parking spaces concerned, TD considered that the rooftop was temporarily not suitable for parking until the prolonged water seepage problem was dealt with; and
- on 27 November 2017, TD secured the agreement with ArchSD to conduct a site meeting at which TD raised the need for repair works to be done such that TD could resolve the water seepage problem and prepare for the re-opening of the roof of the car park for parking purpose. In the meantime, the need for using the roof as a temporary vehicle detention centre arose in April 2018. With the eventual confirmation of ArchSD to proceed with the basic repair works on the roof and the works completion in October 2018, the roof was subsequently opened for use as a temporary vehicle detention centre with effect from 1 April 2019.

47. In response to the Committee's enquiry about the estimated loss of parking fees arising from the closure of rooftop parking spaces at Kwai Fong Car Park from October 2013 up to 1 April 2019, **Commissioner for Transport** replied at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** further explained in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

- users of the car park generally preferred parking their vehicles on the lower floors for convenient entry and exit, while the utilization rate of parking spaces on the rooftop floor was relatively low. The monthly average maximum utilization rate of the car park rose from 44% in October 2013 to about 70% in 2015 (when the 7th floor and rooftop of the car park were closed), and to about 80% in March 2019 (i.e. before the rooftop was formally converted into a temporary vehicle detention centre). This showed that the demand for parking spaces at Kwai Fong Car Park did not outgrow the supply thereat;
- in order to reserve parking spaces for vehicles with monthly parking tickets, the car park sometimes had to restrict the entry of vehicles during 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Operating records of the car park showed that restriction on vehicle entry was imposed on average of 10 and 11 days each month in 2017 and 2018 respectively, and six days on average each month in 2019 (from January to March); and
- by making reference to the utilization rates during the said period with no restriction on vehicle entry imposed and assuming that all vehicles

were able to use the car park when the restriction was in place, TD roughly estimated that the parking fees forgone during the time periods when restriction on vehicle entry was imposed from January 2017 to March 2019 amounted to around \$19,000.

48. In response to the Committee's enquiry about the handling of the 13 abandoned vehicles in five government multi-storey car parks mentioned in paragraph 3.20 of the Audit Report, **Commissioner for Transport** advised at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** added in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

- the car park operators had, in all cases, served notices by registered post to the registered addresses of the vehicle owners, stating that their respective vehicles had been parked at the car park for a prolonged period, and requesting payment in full of the accrued parking fees and removal of the vehicle from the car park;
- where the vehicle owners had failed to pay the parking fees and remove their vehicles from the car park within the specified period, the operators impounded the vehicles with authorized immobilization device, and served notices by registered post to the vehicle owners again, stating that their vehicles would become government property and that the Government was entitled to sell the vehicles if the vehicles were not driven away from the parking spaces and the accrued parking fees remained unsettled; and
- the operators had also published the same notice in Chinese and English newspapers, and contacted the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF") for disposal of the vehicles concerned. In 7 out of the 13 cases, the operators had issued more than two notices by registered post to the registered vehicle owners. Two of them had settled all accrued parking fees and retrieved their vehicles upon receipt of the second notice.

49. With reference to Case 4 in paragraph 3.21 and paragraph 3.22 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought the reasons for the delay in handling an abandoned vehicle at Rumsey Street Car Park by HKPF and the existing procedures for TD/HKPF to handle cases of abandoned vehicles at government car parks under the Road Traffic (Parking on Private Roads) Regulations (Cap. 374O).

50. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** explained in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*) that:

- TD's car parks were designated as private roads under regulation 7 of Cap. 374O. Private road signs were erected at the entrance of the car parks;
- an abandoned vehicle was defined as a vehicle not having a monthly or quarterly parking ticket which had been stationary at a parking space for a continuous period of 30 days or more. TD's car park contractors were required to comply with the operational requirements set out in a specific section entitled "Impounding, Removal, Storage and Disposal of Vehicles" in the contracts to handle abandoned vehicles. On the condition that the provisions of Cap. 374O¹² had been followed, the contractors should ensure that the authorized officers use approved immobilization devices to impound suspected abandoned vehicles, advise the owners to remove the vehicles and deliver the vehicles to HKPF pursuant to the contracts if the owners failed to remove the vehicles;
- TD's car park contractors had all along delivered the abandoned vehicles found in the car parks to HKPF upon completion of required procedures;
- HKPF received in December 2016 a request from the contractor of the Rumsey Street Car Park for taking over three abandoned vehicles, including the subject vehicle in Case 4, which were reportedly impounded under Cap. 374O. Correspondence was then exchanged between HKPF and the contractor to ascertain the compliance with requirements of Cap. 374O. Each request for disposal would be considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to circumstances like the availability of space in HKPF's vehicle pounds. In January 2019, the subject vehicle was accepted for disposal based on such considerations and after satisfying that the requirements of Cap. 374O had been met; and

¹² According to regulation 11(2) of Cap. 374O, the power of impounding or removing a vehicle shall be exercised by the owner of a private road or an authorized officer only when: (a) the vehicle is unattended and the driver cannot be located; or (b) the driver is unable to remove the vehicle, or refuses or fails to remove the vehicle, on being requested to do so by the owner of the private road concerned or an authorized officer in respect of that road. See also Note 13 to paragraph 54 below.

- given the latest advice of the Department of Justice ("DoJ") that it might not be the most desirable way to handle abandoned vehicles in such circumstances as Case 4 by virtue of Cap. 374O, TD had already directed its car park contractors to rely on the "Conditions of Parking and Use", which had all along been displayed in the car parks, to handle abandoned vehicles pursuant to contractual arrangements. As at 9 May 2019, there was no abandoned vehicle in TD's car parks.

51. Noting that the car park operator in Case 4 had contacted HKPF for several times on the disposal of the subject abandoned vehicle, the Committee sought confirmation as to whether TD was informed all along in the meantime and whether TD would offer any advice to the contractor if necessary.

52. **Commissioner for Transport** responded at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** further advised in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

- the car park operator concerned did not seek assistance from TD in the course of handling Case 4. In 2017 and 2018, during four meetings with the car park operator, the operator did not express to TD any difficulties in handling abandoned vehicles; and
- as the handling of abandoned vehicles was not among the core duties of car park operators, it was accorded with a relatively lower priority in TD's monitoring of their performance of duties. To strengthen the monitoring of the operators' performance in this regard, TD had requested them to submit monthly reports on the handling of abandoned vehicles since February 2019. TD would deploy staff to conduct surprise checks to ensure accuracy of the reports.

53. The Committee sought clarification as to whether the capacity of HKPF's vehicle detention centre was one of the factors affecting the taking over of abandoned vehicles from government multi-storey car parks in a timely manner, and the procedures for disposing of such abandoned vehicles by HKPF.

54. **Mr TANG Ping-keung, Acting Commissioner of Police**, explained at the public hearing and **Commissioner of Police** supplemented in his letter dated 11 June 2019 (*Appendix 16*) that:

- the total vehicle capacity of the three Police Vehicle Detention Centres (namely Siu Ho Wan Vehicle Detention Pound, Kowloon Bay Vehicle Detention and Examination Centre and Quarry Bay Vehicle Detention and Examination Centre) was 278. The total number of vehicles detained on the day that the subject abandoned vehicle in Case 4 was accepted (i.e. 17 January 2019) was 387, which exceeded capacity by 39.2%. Since 2017, the total number of vehicles detained in the Police Vehicle Detention Centres normally exceeded capacity by an average of 30%;
- in considering whether to accept an abandoned vehicle referred by a government car park for detention and disposal, HKPF would first need to confirm that all requirements stipulated in regulations 11 and 12 of Cap. 374O¹³ had been satisfied;
- HKPF would also take into account their operational priorities, manpower resources and the capacity of the Police Vehicle Detention Centres. For Case 4, however, the availability of space in the Police Vehicle Detention Centres was not a consideration; and
- a vehicle detained at a Detention Centre that was unclaimed after seizure would become the property of the Government. Its value would be assessed, and it would then either be sent for auction or scrapped depending on its value.

55. The Committee further sought the rationale for designating government multi-storey car parks, which are government properties, as private roads under Cap. 374O, and whether there was a need to ascertain the applicability of Cap. 374O to the management of government multi-storey car parks.

56. **Commissioner for Transport** explained at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

¹³ The requirements include: (a) whether the abandoned vehicle was claimed within three days after its detention; (b) whether a notice was served by post on the registered owner by the private road owner or the authorized officer; (c) whether the vehicle was removed in accordance with the notice within seven days after the service of the notice; and (d) whether the notice was published, or caused to be published, not later than 14 days after service, in an English language newspaper and a Chinese language newspaper published daily and circulating generally in Hong Kong.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- since mid 1980s, the Administration had contracted out the management of multi-storey public car parks to private operators. In this connection, the Administration published in the Gazette at that time that government multi-storey public car parks ceased to be deemed as car parks designated by Commissioner for Transport under the repealed Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 220, 1979 edition). Since then, these car parks had been operated in the same way as other privately-operated public car parks in accordance with Cap. 374O;
- TD had all along followed the relevant provisions of Cap. 374O when drafting tender documents for contracting out the management of car parks and incorporated the relevant provisions as formal tender requirements as well as contract terms after consulting DoJ, which included forfeiting the vehicles and the delivery of such to HKPF for handling; and
- pursuant to the latest legal advice given by DoJ, any car park operators engaged by TD might, according to the "Conditions of Parking and Use" displayed at the car parks, put up a vehicle for sale direct in such way as might be deemed appropriate and the sales proceeds might be used to recover any amount owed to the Government, upon informing the owner that his/her vehicle would be put up for sale unless it was removed from the car park. TD had formally issued written instructions to the car park operators, requiring them to handle abandoned vehicles in accordance with DoJ's legal advice with immediate effect.

57. Noting from paragraph 3.24(b) of the Audit Report that TD was devising a set of procedures to enable expeditious handling of abandoned vehicles, the Committee enquired about the progress in this regard, the relevant procedural guidelines, as well as the measures taken/to be taken by TD to tackle the problem of abandoned vehicles in government multi-storey car parks.

58. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** provided in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) a set of TD's procedures for the car park operators to expedite the disposal of abandoned vehicles. In addition, **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised in the same letter that TD had confirmed to take forward the installation of "Bay Guidance System" at its car parks. Under the system, the cameras to be installed on individual parking spaces could collect real-time parking occupancy information, which could help identify vehicles that had been parked at

the same parking spaces for a prolonged period and were suspected to be abandoned vehicles. TD had already requested the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to include in the relevant tender documents this identification feature as well as the automatic dissemination of alert messages to the car park operators for handling the concerned vehicles. It was expected that the installation works would commence in mid 2020 for completion in the first quarter of 2021.

59. Referring to paragraph 3.25 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought details on the enhancements to be made to the provision of closed-circuit television ("CCTV") security systems in government car parks.

60. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised in his letter dated 9 May 2019 (*Appendix 6*) that in the light of the Audit's recommendation, TD had in collaboration with ArchSD and the Crime Prevention Bureau of HKPF embarked on a review of the provision of CCTVs in TD's car parks, including conducting visits to some car parks to review the existing provision and identify locations where additional CCTV cameras were needed.

D. Management of on-street parking spaces

61. Noting from paragraph 4.2 of the Audit Report that the principle of maintaining 15% of on-street parking spaces empty was formulated in 1967 and reaffirmed in 1972 and 2000, the Committee enquired about the rationale behind this principle and whether any reviews had been conducted since then on the applicability of this principle under the changing circumstances over the years.

62. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- setting the target of achieving 15% vacancy (or 85% occupancy) of on-street parking spaces meant that for every 10 spaces, there would be on average one to two spaces vacant at any one time to cater for on-going motorists' demand, keeping the vehicle circulation time to a minimum, thereby avoiding additional burden on road traffic; and
- the rationale was to strike a balance between the use of kerbside space for parking to address short-term parking need and possible disruption to local traffic in the provision of on-street parking spaces in areas of

high parking demand and limited road space. The yardstick of 15% vacancy was in line with various overseas research findings that vacancy below 15% would result in a sharp increase in circulation time for searching for a space.¹⁴ TD considered it appropriate to continue to adopt 15% vacancy of on-street parking as a target.

63. According to paragraph 4.4(a) of the Audit Report, the contractor engaged by TD for the management of on-street metered parking spaces was required to retrieve data from all on-street parking meters at least once every four days by portable data retrievers, and upload all data to the central computer system. The Committee enquired about the number of non-compliance cases in 2018 and the penalties for such non-compliance.

64. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- in accordance with the contract for management, operation and maintenance of the parking meter system, the contractor shall be responsible for the retrieval, handling, storage and uploading of the transaction data in a timely manner, or it shall be liable to: (a) bear any administrative fee charged by the clearing service provider; and (b) compensate the Administration for the aggregate amount of all transaction data that the clearing service provider might refuse to take into account as a result of the contractor's late uploading or transmission;
- in 2018, there were four cases whereby the contractor failed to comply with the aforesaid requirements because the contractor's staff were unable to access the parking meters concerned due to the obstruction/occupation of metered parking spaces by fallen trees/tree branches, bamboo sticks or construction waste. In accordance with the contract, the contractor had reported these cases to the government departments concerned for clearing the sites; and

¹⁴ According to TD, overseas researches indicated that the time for a car to circulate on roads in searching for a parking space would be in the range of about two to three minutes when the vacancy rate stayed at 15% or more, but would increase sharply to some 20 minutes when the vacancy rate dropped to 10% and below.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- upon clearance of the obstruction/occupation of the metered parking spaces, transaction data of the associated parking meters concerned were subsequently retrieved and processed properly by the contractor. As the above non-compliance cases were caused by external factors beyond the contractor's control, and there was no resultant loss of parking revenue, no penalty was imposed against the contractor.

65. Noting from paragraph 4.8 of the Audit Report that the results of the utilization surveys conducted on all metered parking spaces from 2015 to 2018 indicated that the metered parking fee evasion rate had remained at around 30%, the Committee asked about the existing procedures for handling the evasion cases and whether there were any new measures/strategies to address the fee evasion problem.

66. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- the contractor was required by the contract to inspect all on-street parking meters at least once every four days. If individual parking spaces were found to be occupied by vehicles but without payment of parking fees, the contractor would report the cases to HKPF for follow-up actions. In addition, the contractor would issue a report to HKPF on a monthly basis in respect of those parking meters installed in areas of high parking demand but collecting extraordinarily low amount of parking meter revenue, in order to draw their attention to the potential fee evasion cases; and
- TD had already awarded a contract to a new operator in May 2019 for installation of new parking meters by phases starting from the first half of 2020 to replace the existing ones. Each new parking meter would be fitted with occupancy sensors to detect whether the relevant metered parking space was occupied or not. The backend system would provide real-time information on metered parking spaces being occupied but without payment of parking fees. TD had planned to share this real-time information on the locations of these parking spaces with HKPF for their reference.

67. According to Table 9 in paragraph 4.9 of the Audit Report, from 2015 to 2018, on average, the objective of maintaining the availability rate of on-street parking spaces at 15% was not met in 15 (40%) of the 37 districts. In particular,

this objective had not been met in many of the districts in Kowloon. The Committee sought the reasons behind and the actions taken by TD to improve the on-street parking space availability rate.

68. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- the availability rate hinged on three parameters, namely, demand, supply and charge rate of the on-street parking spaces. From 2015 to 2018, the charge rate remained at a low level of \$2 per 15 minutes (maximum) while the territory-wide supply of on-street metered parking spaces maintained at a relatively constant level of about 18 000;
- during the same period, the parking demand continued to rise with the overall increase in the number of licensed vehicles. This had rendered some districts with the following characteristics not being able to meet the 15% availability rate target:
 - (a) districts already fully developed decades ago with insufficient or nil ancillary parking spaces, and with limited land and road space for the provision of more parking spaces; and
 - (b) districts with mixed land uses (mixed residential, commercial, retail, entertainment, etc.) and with high density of residential and working population constituting considerable home-end and destination-end parking demand.

Most districts in Kowloon, such as Kowloon City, Hung Hom, Yau Tsim Mong and To Kwa Wan, had inherited the above characteristics. Unless land occupied by old developments could be unleashed through re-development proposals, new land could hardly be identified for increasing parking spaces in Kowloon substantially;

- TD had adopted the following multi-pronged measures to increase the parking provision:
 - (a) requiring developers to provide parking spaces at the higher end of the parking standards under HKPSG for new developments;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (b) providing an underground public car park in the proposed open space at Sze Mei Street in San Po Kong; and
 - (c) planning for APS trials in some identified sites, such as Yen Chow Street in Sham Shui Po; and
- on-street parking and loading/unloading spaces would only be designated where road capacity permitted. Against this principle, TD cautiously increased on-street parking spaces in Kowloon in the past three years, with 152 spaces already put in place (comprising 19 for private cars, 101 for motorcycles, 28 for coaches and 4 for goods vehicles). For off-street parking spaces in Kowloon, about 1 500 had been planned, of which 1 109 were commissioned, comprising 992 for private cars, 63 for motorcycles, 25 for coaches and 29 for goods vehicles.

69. With reference to paragraph 4.11 of the Audit Report, the Committee asked why different parking fees charged in close meter locations. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- metered parking spaces were set up at different times and hence might have adopted different charge levels with due consideration of the then traffic conditions, overall parking space supply and demand, and acceptance of users. If the overall utilization of the cluster of metered parking spaces at the same locality did not generally reach the threshold (i.e. 85% occupancy) for adjustment, and the traffic flow had not been adversely affected by cars searching for parking spaces, no adjustment would normally be made. TD found it appropriate to consider the charge on a case-by-case basis;
- TD was reviewing the charging level of metered parking spaces at the same locality with different parking fees with a view to unifying the rates as appropriate. The target was to complete the review by end 2019. Subject to the outcome of local consultation, the adjustments would be implemented in various locations as appropriate progressively; and
- in the case of Kowloon City as cited in the Audit Report, the parking spaces at Inverness Road recorded a utilization rate of 86.7% on weekdays in 2018, exceeding TD's target utilization rate of 85%

marginally. TD was reviewing the need to adjust the charging level accordingly and would consult the local community in due course.

Commissioner for Transport attached in her letter dated 14 October 2019 (*Appendix 17*) an extract of the Transport Planning and Design Manual showing the relevant clauses on the objectives of installing parking meters and imposing meter charges.

70. With reference to paragraphs 4.13 and 4.14 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought the reasons for allocating parking meters with different types of "longest parking period" for each transaction on the same street, and how the term "core commercial areas" should be defined in determining the "longest parking period" for on-street metered parking spaces.

71. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- the intention of providing metered parking spaces with a parking duration of at most 30 minutes per payment in "core commercial areas" was to encourage turnover of parked vehicles. "Core commercial areas" generally referred to places where short duration business activities and quick stop-over took place frequently. However, in view that mixed land use had become very commonly found in Hong Kong, the need to adopt different "longest parking period" for on-street parking spaces in close proximity arose. The aim was to balance the competing needs and yet to provide convenience to the motorists; and
- apart from commercial areas, other areas of different development setting were facing competing parking demand which required different parking durations. TD would allocate the parking meters with different types of "longest parking period" to suit different needs. In the case of Wood Road as cited in the Audit Report, the two parking spaces with the longest parking period of two hours were to cater for users of the nearby Wan Chai Park whereas the four parking spaces with the longest parking period of 30 minutes were to cater for other users, such as shoppers, taxi drivers, etc. who only stopped over for a short period.

72. In response to the Committee's enquiry about the latest position on TD's review of the "longest parking period" for each transaction of the existing two-hour parking meters in core commercial areas mentioned in paragraph 4.20(b) of the Audit Report, **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that the review was expected to be completed by end 2019. It was preliminarily considered that the "longest parking period" of about 290 metered parking spaces over the territory should be reduced to 30 minutes. TD would consult the local community and relevant District Councils on the reduction in early 2020.

73. Noting from paragraph 4.15(a) of the Audit Report that the metered parking spaces at Kam Shan Country Park were set with different operating periods, the Committee asked why different meter operating periods were applied to the parking spaces for the same vehicle type in some parking places and whether there were any guidelines on determining the operating period of a metered parking space.

74. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- while there were ten different types of operating period for on-street metered parking spaces as shown in Appendix G to the Audit Report, the majority of on-street metered parking spaces adopted the charge period covering at least 8:00 am to 8:00 pm on weekdays (99.7%) and 10:00 am to 10:00 pm on general holidays (96.3%). The intention was to encourage turnover during the high time motorists used their cars for commuting, business or leisure activities;
- some on-street parking spaces located in close vicinity might require adoption of different operating periods to address different parking needs. Taking the case of Kam Shan Country Park as an example, while it was necessary to charge motorists for on-street parking to encourage turnover of the parking spaces, TD had to provide a portion of the spaces free of charge during general holidays so as to facilitate motorists to engage with long-hour countryside activities as it would not be possible for motorists to return every two hours to pay the parking fee; and
- TD also determined the operating periods of on-street parking spaces on a case-by-case basis having regard to the general activities taking

place in the district concerned, parking needs of the motorists and prevailing traffic conditions with reference to broad guiding principles.

An extract of the Transport Planning and Design Manual containing the relevant clauses on the determination of operating period was provided in Commissioner for Transport's letter dated 14 October 2019 (*Appendix 17*).

75. According to paragraph 4.17 of the Audit Report, Audit's analysis of the quarterly reports on low-utilized parking meters for the period from 2016 to 2018 revealed that 212 parking meters covering 399 parking spaces with persistent low utilization were not redeployed. The Committee asked whether TD had looked into the reasons behind.

76. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that since 2018, 33 parking meters had been released for possible relocation to other locations. TD had to proceed with the relocation cautiously because traffic management problems such as illegal prolonged parking might arise once the associated parking spaces had become non-metered.

77. Noting from paragraphs 4.19(a)(iii) and 4.20(c) of the Audit Report that TD had agreed to conduct regular survey and consider extending the meter operating periods for parking spaces with high utilization, the Committee enquired about the progress in this regard.

78. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that TD had conducted desktop study on the operating period of parking meters, and had preliminarily identified about 220 metered parking spaces the operating period of which might need to be reviewed for extension. For these parking spaces, TD would conduct on-site surveys at suitable time to collect the latest utilization rate and aimed to complete the review by end 2019 or early 2020. Once the review was completed, TD would consult the local community and the relevant District Councils on any proposed changes.

79. With reference to paragraph 4.20(a) of the Audit Report, the Committee asked about the progress of TD's review on the parking fees for meters charging the low rate. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that TD was reviewing the parking fees for meters charging the low

rate of \$2 per 30 minutes, with a view to completing the review by end 2019. It was considered preliminarily that the charging rate of about 1 600 metered parking spaces should be increased to \$2 per 15 minutes. TD would consult the local community and the relevant District Councils on the increase in early 2020.

80. According to paragraph 4.25 of the Audit Report, TD conducted in 2017 a survey covering 10 138 on-street non-metered parking spaces for motorcycles in 590 parking places, and discovered that 618 motorcycles considered not roadworthy¹⁵ were found in 278 (47%) parking places surveyed. The Committee enquired about the follow-up actions taken by TD in respect of the aforesaid 618 motorcycles and the procedures for handling prolonged parking at non-metered parking spaces.

81. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- in general, after identification of abandoned motorcycles at on-street parking spaces (either through surveys conducted by TD or through complaints received by TD or other departments), LandsD would be responsible for posting of notice under section 6(1) of the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28) requiring the occupation of the land to cease before a specified date. Thereafter, the abandoned motorcycle would be removed by LandsD. As regards abandoned vehicles that caused serious obstruction and danger to other road users, HKPF would remove such vehicles in accordance with the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374); and
- TD had recently taken stock of the current status of the aforementioned 618 motorcycles, and noted that 545 of them no longer stayed in the same parking place. TD would continue to follow up with the concerned departments on the remaining cases and keep monitoring the situation.

82. In view of the high utilization of on-street motorcycle parking spaces (102%) as well as the issues of abandoned motorcycles and illegal parking revealed

¹⁵ It referred to cases with one of these conditions: (a) missing licence plate; (b) missing motor vehicle licence; (c) expired licence; or (d) poor vehicle conditions such as flat tyre, heavily rusted or broken headlamp.

by TD's 2017 survey, the Committee asked whether TD still considered that there was no imminent need to regulate on-street motorcycle parking by metering.

83. **Commissioner for Transport** responded in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- the charging proposal for on-street motorcycle parking spaces could not be pursued after TD's reviews conducted in 1999, 2006 and 2012 due to technical, operational and enforcement difficulties as follows:
 - (a) due to the size of motorcycles which could easily be moved, it was difficult to determine who had paid or should pay the parking fee; and
 - (b) security devices for motorcycles to be chained to railings were tried out in 2000, 2008 and 2010-2011 but the usage rates were less than 5%, indicating that motorcyclists were reluctant to use such anti-theft devices; and
- to deal with the current shortage of motorcycle parking spaces, TD would continue its efforts to increase the supply of parking spaces through various measures, which included:
 - (a) providing additional on-street motorcycle parking spaces in various districts, including the use of space underneath flyovers; and
 - (b) requiring temporary car parks with motorcycle parking spaces to clearly indicate at the entrance the availability of such parking spaces and the relevant parking fees as a promotion.

84. Noting from paragraph 4.28(c) of the Audit Report cases of non-metered parking spaces occupied by abandoned vehicles or other objects, the Committee enquired about the measures taken by TD to deal with such cases and their effectiveness.

85. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 14 November 2019 (*Appendix 18*) that in response to Audit's recommendation, TD would conduct surveys on a half-yearly basis starting from December 2019 to identify any unlawful

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

occupation of non-metered parking spaces by abandoned vehicles or other objects. Cases identified would be referred promptly to the relevant government departments for follow-up actions as appropriate. TD would evaluate the effectiveness of the first survey with a view to enhancing the subsequent surveys, which would take place in mid 2020.

86. With reference to paragraph 4.29(b) of the Audit Report, the Committee sought explanation for the discrepancies revealed by a comparison of the result of Audit's site visit to a non-metered parking place and an LCSD's car park at Shek O Road on 13 December 2018 with TD's inventory list.

87. **Commissioner for Transport** clarified at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

- at present, there were a total of 223 non-metered on-street parking spaces at Shek O Road (including those in the vicinity of Shek O Beach). Among them, 28 parking spaces were managed by TD (14 located near Tung Au Barbecue Site and the other 14 located near 19 Shek O Road), whereas 195 parking spaces located in the vicinity of Shek O Beach were managed by LCSD (190 being public parking spaces and 5 being used for meeting the operational needs of the venue); and
- the discrepancies occurred from mistakenly including the aforesaid 190 public parking spaces managed by LCSD as TD's non-metered on-street parking spaces in TD's inventory list. The relevant parking space figures had been rectified. TD was pressing ahead with the updating of its internal Transport Information Systems. Upon completion of the system update, the risk of double-counting parking spaces at the same locations could be eliminated.

E. Implementation of parking-related technology initiatives

88. With reference to paragraph 5.6 of the Audit Report, the Committee requested TD to explain the missing information of 525 car parks from its "HKeMobility" mobile application.

89. **Commissioner for Transport** advised in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that TD integrated three mobile applications to "HKeMobility", an all-in-one mobile application, in July 2018. At that time, TD's internal parking data system, which covered the car park location information and supported the automatic data migration and regular updating in "HKeMobility", was under enhancement, resulting in the temporary unavailability of some car parks' information to the public. Upon completion of the system enhancement work in end 2018, the full set of car park data, including car park location information, was uploaded to "HKeMobility" for dissemination to the public since February 2019. Thereafter, car park information data stored in TD's internal data system would be uploaded to "HKeMobility" at regular intervals automatically.

90. With reference to paragraph 5.8 of the Audit Report, the Committee enquired about TD's efforts in seeking support from the Government Property Agency ("GPA"), the Housing Department and LCSD for the provision of parking vacancy information of the car parks under their purview, and the plans put in place by these three departments to provide further parking vacancy information to TD.

91. **Commissioner for Transport** responded at the public hearings and supplemented in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- in mid 2016, TD met with the above three departments to explain the procedures for updating the parking vacancy information and encouraged the departments to include the relevant clauses in their new agreements with car park operators specifying the provision of parking vacancy information. With these department's contributions, the parking vacancy information of the first batch of 11 car parks (including eight under HA, two under LCSD and one under GPA) had been disseminated through TD's mobile application since end 2016/early 2017; and
- TD conducted follow-up meetings with the three departments in early 2019, and shared a new standard clause of parking information for STT car park. These departments reaffirmed their support to the Administration's open data policy and agreed to incorporate new requirements during renewal of their car park management contracts to achieve the parking information dissemination in "HKeMobility". As at early September 2019, GPA had already taken steps to include new clauses into their two renewed car park contracts.

92. **Mr Vincent LIU Ming-kwong, Government Property Administrator**, advised at the public hearing and supplemented in his letter dated 12 June 2019 (*Appendix 19*) that GPA would introduce at a new car park in Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point an online booking system, which could provide real-time vacancy information to TD's "HKeMobility" mobile application. For the existing car parks under the management of GPA, GPA was collaborating with other departments to explore the technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness of installing suitable devices, with a view to effectively disseminating real-time parking vacancy information via "HKeMobility". Priority would be given to those car parks with a large number of parking spaces and high utilization.

93. **Mr Stanley YING Yiu-hong, Director of Housing**, explained at the public hearing and supplemented in his letter dated 18 June 2019 (*Appendix 20*) that in general, only a small number of parking spaces were made available for hourly parking by visitors in public housing estates, and the dissemination of parking vacancy information to the public might not be appropriate. To support TD's initiative, HA had incorporated new provisions in car park management contracts upon renewal to require car park operators to disseminate parking vacancy information. At present, parking vacancy information of 10 HA car parks had been made available through TD's "HKeMobility" mobile application. The names of these car parks were shown in the above letter.

94. **Director of Leisure and Cultural Services** advised at the public hearing and supplemented in her letter dated 11 June 2019 (*Appendix 21*) that LCS D planned to include new requirements in the terms of new contract for large-scale car parks requiring the operators to provide parking vacancy information through "HKeMobility". It was expected that the new requirement could be gradually rolled out in the coming four years. LCS D would explore the use of innovation and technology for dissemination of vacancy information of its car parks in consultation with relevant government bureaux/departments.

95. On the Committee's further enquiry about the timetable for disseminating the parking vacancy information of the 11 government multi-storey car parks, **Commissioner for Transport** advised at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that TD completed in June 2019 the upgrading of access control systems for its 10 government car parks (except Yau Ma Tei Car Park which would be demolished due to the construction of the Central Kowloon Route) to enable automatic transmission of real-time parking vacancy information to TD's "HKeMobility"

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

mobile application and the Government's Public Sector Information Portal. The aforesaid 10 government car parks involved about 4 100 private car parking spaces and their parking vacancy information had been disseminated in full.

96. In response to the Committee's enquiry, **Commissioner for Transport** advised at the public hearings and **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that the development cost of TD's "HKeMobility" mobile application was \$600,000 and the expenditure incurred for the application's maintenance and enhancement since its launch in July 2018 amounted to \$1.84 million. As the day-to-day management of "HKeMobility" was an on-going task of TD staff, TD did not have separate breakdown for the staff establishment involved.

97. The Committee further asked whether TD considered the maintenance and enhancement costs of its "HKeMobility" mobile application justifiable from the value-for-money perspective given that the application had only operated for one year and its development cost was just \$600,000.

98. **Commissioner for Transport** responded in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that since its launch in July 2018, there had been 11 occasions of major upgrading of "HKeMobility" to cater for additional features and functions, including extending walking network to Mong Kok and Yau Ma Tei, residents' service information, cycling information, bus services information, information on Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Boundary Crossing, provision of road works information, and estimated arrival time for some MTR lines. Among all additional features, the extension of walking network cost about \$1.1 million to collect and verify the walking route data. TD considered that the development cost of \$600,000 should not be directly compared with the subsequent enhancement and maintenance costs.

99. With reference to paragraph 5.9 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought reasons for the unavailability or incompleteness of supplementary information such as opening hours, payment methods and electric vehicle ("EV") charging facilities available of the 30 car parks (including 11 government multi-storey car parks) in "HKeMobility" mobile application and the plan already put in place/to be put in place by TD to improve the situation.

100. **Commissioner for Transport** responded in her letter dated 9 October 2019 (*Appendix 13*) that:

- TD sought inputs from the Housing Department, LCSD and GPA and standardized the information of government public car parks to be disseminated in early 2019. The supplementary information such as payment information, EV charging services information and opening hours had been progressively released to the public since May 2019; and
- for non-government car parks, operators could, at their discretion, reveal other supplementary car park information on the websites of the car parks under their own management. As some information, such as parking fee and special offers, was subject to change frequently, TD considered it more preferable for operators to disseminate such information to the public via the website of the car park rather than direct display in "HKeMobility".

101. Referring to paragraph 5.16(b) of the Audit Report about the occupation of parking spaces with EV chargers by non-EVs, the Committee asked about the factors to be considered in identifying the locations for the installation of EV chargers at car parks and measures to ensure that parking spaces with EV chargers would be available for use by EVs.

102. **Ms Maisie CHENG Mei-sze, Director of Environmental Protection**, advised at the public hearing and supplemented in her letter dated 13 June 2019 (*Appendix 22*) that:

- in the past, many parking spaces equipped with EV chargers in government car parks were located near the exit or on the ground floor as it was technically more viable to install the chargers and the associated electrical wirings closer to the electrical switch room; and
- to avoid the existing parking spaces with EV charges being occupied by non-EVs at times due to their convenient locations, the Environmental Protection Department planned to install the additional EV chargers in future at locations away from the most popular and convenient spots, such as the spaces on upper floors of the car parks or locations further away from exit or lift, in order to enhance the opportunity of EV drivers to charge their EVs. Moreover, traffic

cones and/or appropriate notice would be placed by the car park operators at the parking spaces with chargers wherever practicable subject to actual utilization, so that the space concerned could be made vacated for the use by EVs.

103. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** supplemented in his letter dated 25 July 2019 (*Appendix 7*) that:

- TD would take forward the installation of "Bay Guidance System" at its car parks. Apart from displaying the number of vacant parking spaces, the system could collect real-time parking occupancy information of individual parking spaces, which would be disseminated through panels installed on major driveways of the car parks to facilitate motorists to locate the vacant parking spaces; and
- TD had discussed with the Environmental Protection Department in respect of specifying in the tender documents of the system the identification of parking spaces with EV chargers, thereby enabling EV drivers to identify vacant parking spaces installed with EV chargers within the car parks.

104. With reference to 5.18(a) of the Audit Report, the Committee enquired about the progress and timetable for the installation of EV chargers at the three government multi-storey car parks in Aberdeen, Kennedy Town and Kwai Fong, as well as the plan and timetable for the extension of the public EV charging networks to other government car parks.

105. **Director of Environmental Protection** advised at the public hearing and supplemented in her letter dated 13 June 2019 (*Appendix 22*) that as announced in the 2019-2020 Budget, the Administration would allocate \$120 million to extend the public EV charging networks at government car parks in the coming three years. Subject to the availability of spare power capacity and technical feasibility of installing medium chargers in these government car parks, the Administration had initially assessed that over 1 000 additional public chargers were expected to be in place by 2022, bringing the total number of government public chargers to about 1 700. It was planned that EV chargers would be installed in Aberdeen Car Park in 2019-2020 financial year, and in Kennedy Town Car Park and Kwai Fong Car Park in 2020-2021 financial year.

106. According to paragraphs 5.20 to 5.22 of the Audit Report, since the release of the 2002 Study Report, no record was available showing that TD had commenced a relevant pilot study on APS until 2018. The Committee asked about any studies on APS conducted between 2002 and 2018.

107. **Commissioner for Transport** explained in her letter dated 4 November 2019 (*Appendix 23*) that:

- the Administration had since 2001 put in place guidelines¹⁶ to facilitate planning of APS in addition to the legal requirements.¹⁷ Based on the anticipated surplus of parking spaces for private cars up to 2011 identified by the 2002 Study Report, TD subsequently reviewed the private car parking standards in HKPSG.¹⁸ As both reviews recommended a reduction in the parking provision to reflect the then demands, TD considered that there was no imminent need for the wider use of APS in view of the prevailing and forecasted surplus of parking spaces;¹⁹ and
- in response to TAC's recommendations of its study conducted in 2014 on the road traffic congestion in Hong Kong, the Administration completed a parking policy review in 2017 and recommended that an appropriate number of parking spaces should be provided if the overall development permitted. TD then considered that a more focused study on the implementation of APS should be conducted, and commissioned the pilot study on APS in early 2018.

108. With reference to paragraph 5.24 of the Audit Report, the Committee sought details of the pilot use of APS, including the pilot projects, number of parking spaces available and the implementation timeframe.

¹⁶ Transport Planning and Design Manual by TD and Practice Note Issue No. 2/2000 "Car Parking Requirement Mechanical Parking System" by LandsD.

¹⁷ The design, construction and the maintenance of mechanized vehicle parking system was governed by the Lifts and Escalators (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 327), which was repealed by the current Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618).

¹⁸ See paragraphs 20 to 22 above.

¹⁹ The parking space ratio for private cars remained at a relatively high level in the 2000s and early 2010s (for example, before 2012, the ratio was maintained at about 1.3 or higher).

109. **Secretary for Transport and Housing** advised at the public hearings and in his letter dated 25 May 2019 (*Appendix 8*), and **Commissioner for Transport** provided an update in her letter dated 4 November 2019 (*Appendix 23*) that:

- as at early November 2019, TD had identified four sites for the APS pilot projects, which included an STT site in Tsuen Wan, an open space at the junction of Yen Chow Street and Tung Chau Street in Sham Shui Po, and the proposed government buildings on Chung Kong Road in Sheung Wan and Sheung Mau Street in Chai Wan. The pilot projects in Sham Shui Po and Tsuen Wan would provide around 200 and 70 additional parking spaces respectively, whereas the numbers of parking spaces to be provided under the pilot projects in Sheung Wan and Chai Wan were still being studied; and
- as regards the two remaining sites, TD would work actively with the relevant government departments to explore the preliminary technical feasibility before making public the proposed sites in due course for consultation with the relevant District Councils. The pilot study was scheduled for completion by early 2020. Subject to the outcome of the technical feasibility and local consultation, TD planned to commence construction works of the projects in batches starting from 2021.

F. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall comments

110. The Committee:

- notes that:
 - (a) with a transport policy which centres on the use of public transport, the Government's parking policy is to accord priority to considering and meeting the parking demand of commercial vehicles and to provide an appropriate number of parking spaces for private cars if overall development permits;
 - (b) from December 2006 to December 2018, the total number of licensed private cars, commercial vehicles and motorcycles

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

increased by 44.4% to 744 191, while that of parking spaces only increased by 11.6% to 756 909; and

- (c) in 2018, the revenue from 11 government multi-storey car parks and metered parking spaces amounted to \$220 million and \$287 million respectively;

- emphasizes that:

- (a) it is incumbent upon the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB") to formulate long-term planning and policies to ensure adequate provision of parking spaces for licensed vehicles;

- (b) commercial vehicles carrying passengers or goods play a key role in the logistics industry and tourism industry which are important sectors of the Hong Kong economy. Adequate provision of parking spaces is essential to commercial transport operators;

- (c) there is a pressing need for the Transport Department ("TD") to address the growing shortfall in private car parking spaces;

- (d) while ancillary parking spaces associated with a development are provided to meet the parking needs arising from the development per se, public parking spaces are needed to address the demand in different districts and localities; and

- (e) proper management of government multi-storey car parks and on-street parking spaces, and effective implementation of parking-related technology initiatives can optimize the utilization of limited and insufficient public parking spaces;

- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that THB's inadequacies in its long-term planning of car parking provision and addressing the growth in the size of vehicle fleet have led to the persistently insufficient supply of parking spaces to meet the parking demand of all licensed vehicles, as evidenced by the following:

- (a) from December 2006 to December 2018, the overall ratio of parking spaces to vehicles ("parking space ratio") dropped from 1.32 to 1.02, and would further drop below 1 in the coming years based on TD's projection; and

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (b) during the same period, the parking space ratio for commercial vehicles slightly increased by 4.9% from 0.61 to 0.64, due to the shrinkage of transboundary goods movement. As regards private cars, the parking space ratio for private cars decreased significantly by 27.2% from 1.51 to 1.10 due to the substantial growth in the number of private cars;
- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that TD has failed to closely monitor the decreasing parking space ratio for private cars, to make appropriate planning, and to take timely measures to alleviate the shortfall of such parking spaces, as evidenced by the following:
 - (a) TD has not compiled specific projection on the future supply of public parking spaces for private cars;
 - (b) following the Second Parking Demand Study Final Report issued in November 2002 ("2002 Study Report"), which predicted a surplus of private car parking spaces, the planning standards of ancillary car parking spaces in housing developments of Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines ("HKPSG") were revised seven times, with two major revisions on private car parking provision in private housing developments in 2003 and 2014, resulting in a reduction of such parking spaces;
 - (c) the private car parking space ratio had decreased to 1.10 in 2018 and was projected to further decrease to less than 1 in the coming years. However, TD only commissioned a review on the parking standard for provision of private car parking spaces in HKPSG in August 2018 under the consultancy study on parking for commercial vehicles which commenced in December 2017 for the formulation of short to long-term measures to address the parking demand of commercial vehicles;
 - (d) parking space demand was mainly met by the provision of ancillary parking spaces in government, institution or community ("G/IC") and private developments, instead of public parking spaces as there were no promulgated guidelines for the provision of public parking spaces in HKPSG. TD only decided on a case-by-case basis the incorporation of public parking spaces in G/IC and private developments; and

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (e) the use of automated parking systems ("APSs") was one of the remedial measures formulated in the 2002 Study Report to address the parking shortage problem in the long-term. It was not until some 16 years later in 2018 that TD commissioned a consultant to conduct a pilot study with a view to establishing the feasibility of developing public car parks with APSs;
- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that the traffic congestion problem in Hong Kong is aggravated by insufficient provision of parking spaces which has caused motorists to circulate or double park on roads looking or waiting for parking spaces. A parking space ratio of private cars around 1 could not meet the parking needs of a private car which generally requires two parking spaces, one where the vehicle is normally parked when not in use and the other where the vehicle is parked temporarily around destination of an activity;
 - notes that TD is planning a total of six pilot projects for APS. As at early November 2019, four sites have been identified for implementing APS pilot projects. Subject to the outcome of the technical feasibility and local consultation, TD plans to commence construction works of the projects in batches starting from 2021;
 - expresses grave dissatisfaction that there were inadequacies in planning and provision of public parking spaces in G/IC developments and in private developments as evidenced by the following cases in the Director of Audit's Report ("Audit Report"):
 - (a) *Case 1:* TD took more than seven years to put forth the proposal to split a Town Park project in Tseung Kwan O ("TKO") into two separate projects (one in Area 68 and another with an underground car park providing 395 parking spaces in Area 66). TD also had not taken early actions to plan for parking facilities concerning the termination of a short-term tenancy ("STT") car park in TKO Area 66. Even if the STT car park could be reprovisioned in-situ to provide 395 parking spaces, there would still be a shortfall of about 380 parking spaces²⁰ for meeting the estimated requirement of 880 parking spaces in the area;

²⁰ The shortfall has taken into account the proposed 395 parking spaces to be provided in-situ and 105 parking spaces to be provided in a Joint User Government Office Building in TKO Area 67 (see paragraph 26).

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (b) *Case 2:* From October 2016 to August 2018, the Lands Department ("LandsD") conducted seven inspections on a public lorry park with 155 light goods vehicle ("LGV") parking spaces to check the owner's compliance with the land lease condition and found no lorry was parked in the lorry park. However, LandsD had not issued warning letter for the non-compliance²¹ identified in its inspection of October 2017. On the other hand, TD's survey on illegal parking in the area suggested that there was a demand for LGV parking spaces; and
 - (c) *Case 3:* In February 1999, LandsD included the provision of public parking spaces (not less than 200 for LGVs and not less than 178 for private cars) as a special condition in the land lease of a private development. LandsD's inspections in August and October 2018 found that some LGV parking spaces were occupied by private cars and letters were issued to the lot owner requiring rectification. The Audit Commission ("Audit") noted that the non-compliance remained unrectified during its site visit in January 2019;
- notes that:
- (a) TD consulted the Sai Kung District Council on 5 March 2019 on the reprovisioning plan for the concerned STT car park in TKO Area 66, which included construction of a town park with underground public vehicle park in the area;
 - (b) internal guidelines are being revised to require all government departments to consult TD on the need to provide public car parks during the early stage of project planning;
 - (c) updated guidelines were promulgated by LandsD in May 2019 for the handling of cases relating to non-compliance of lease conditions and follow-up actions in respect of rectified cases; and
 - (d) THB/TD have initiated the process of revising an internal circular so that the requirements to incorporate public parking spaces in various government projects in line with the principle of "Single

²¹ LandsD found in its inspection of October 2016 that the ingress and egress points of the subject car park were blocked by movable railings, many lights were turned off and no lorry was parked therein. Similar non-compliance was identified by LandsD in its inspection of October 2017.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

Site, Multiple Uses" will be set out by the project proponents and works agents as part of the project scope under Project Definition Statements after consulting TD;

- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that communication problems and lack of coordination between TD and the Architectural Services Department ("ArchSD") in taking forward the re-roofing works for Kwai Fong Car Park had contributed to the prolonged closure of 75 parking spaces on the rooftop of the car park for more than five years, as evidenced by the following:
 - (a) upon the completion of the security enhancement works in October 2013, TD found that the rooftop of the car park was temporarily not suitable for parking due to water seepage problem and thus closed the rooftop pending repair works; and
 - (b) while TD considered that the surface of the rooftop was in need of massive re-roofing works, ArchSD merely arranged water seepage maintenance works on the 7th floor and rooftop of the car park from 2014 to 2018. The car park rooftop remained closed during the period until it was re-opened for use as a temporary vehicle detention centre on 1 April 2019 despite the fact that the water seepage problem had yet to be fully resolved;
- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that TD had failed to monitor the contractors in the handling of abandoned vehicles in government multi-storey car parks, resulting in the prolonged unavailability of some parking spaces for public use. As at 12 November 2018, there were 13 abandoned vehicles in five government multi-storey car parks. Up to 31 December 2018, 10 of the 13 vehicles had been abandoned for more than 1 year to 11 years. The parking fees forgone in respect of the prolonged occupation of the parking spaces by the 13 vehicles amounted to \$3.4 million;
- notes that:
 - (a) TD is conducting a review, which is expected to be completed by end 2019, on the feasibility of opening part of the roof of Kwai Fong Car Park for car parking purpose while continuing to reserve the remaining part for vehicle detention purpose;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (b) TD has formally issued written instructions to the car park operators requiring them to handle abandoned vehicles in accordance with the "Conditions of Parking and Use" displayed at the car parks with immediate effect, and has approved a set of procedures to enable expeditious disposal of abandoned vehicles by the car park operators; and
 - (c) with effect from February 2019, TD's car park contractors have been submitting monthly returns on the numbers and details of abandoned vehicles in TD's car parks for TD's monitoring of their performance;
- strongly urges TD to:
- (a) closely monitor the progress of the pilot study on APSs and step up efforts in implementing APSs in government car parks based on the recommendations of the pilot study;
 - (b) closely monitor the parking space ratio for private cars and take appropriate measures to increase the supply of parking spaces in accordance with the growth in numbers of private cars to meet the widening shortfall;
 - (c) put in place a mechanism to monitor the availability and occupancy rates of public parking spaces in government multi-storey car parks on a regular basis;
 - (d) consider how to put the rooftop parking spaces of Kwai Fong Car Park into effective use in the long-run taking into account the utilization rate of parking spaces on rooftop and the additional maintenance cost arising from its chronic water seepage problem;
 - (e) enhance its future liaison with ArchSD in respect of the maintenance and repair works of government car parks with a view to minimizing the related impact on the availability of parking spaces for public use;
 - (f) explore effective measures to assist contractors in removing abandoned vehicles in government multi-storey car parks with a view to releasing the occupied parking spaces expeditiously;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (g) issue internal guidelines for establishing the requirements for public parking spaces in new development and redevelopment proposals; and
 - (h) step up its efforts in monitoring the utilization of the public lorry park in private developments and ascertain the reasons for the under-utilization of LGV parking spaces in Case 2 above, including whether a high parking fee is a factor, and implement improvement measures as necessary;
- strongly urges LandsD to:
- (a) step up its inspection efforts to ensure private lot owners' compliance with land lease condition to provide parking spaces for public use, and take appropriate enforcement actions against non-compliance cases in a timely manner; and
 - (b) explore with TD feasible measures to assist car park operators of private developments in dealing with the occupation of LGV parking spaces by private cars; and
- strongly urges ArchSD to proactively monitor the progress of the maintenance and repair works of government car parks and take appropriate follow-up actions in a timely manner.

Specific comments

111. The Committee:

Planning and provision of public parking spaces

- expresses grave dissatisfaction that:
- (a) from 2011 to 2018, the number of STT parking spaces for commercial vehicles decreased by 3 235 (24%) from 13 344 to 10 109 and that for private cars by 1 626 (7%) from 23 055 to 21 429; and

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (b) as at 30 September 2018, 41 STT car parks (providing 6 187 parking spaces for private cars and 2 115 for commercial vehicles) would be terminated for long-term developments in the coming years;
- notes that:
 - (a) Commissioner for Transport has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 2.17 and 2.18 of the Audit Report;
 - (b) Director of Lands has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 2.17(h) and (i), and 2.18 of the Audit Report; and
 - (c) Secretary for Transport and Housing and Secretary for Development have agreed with Audit's recommendation in paragraph 2.19 of the Audit Report;
- recommends that:
 - (a) TD should consider providing incentives to encourage developers to provide more hourly charged parking spaces in their car parks or including in the land lease condition of private developments a clause requiring the provision of a specified number of hourly charged parking spaces with a view to increasing the availability of public parking spaces; and
 - (b) TD should, in liaison with LandsD, identify suitable sites, particularly those without immediate implementation programme for long-term developments, to provide more temporary public parking spaces in districts with parking demand, with a view to ensuring better utilization of scarce land resources;

Management of government multi-storey car parks

- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that:
 - (a) while the Government's policy objectives in managing government multi-storey car parks are to maintain the availability rate of parking spaces at 15% during peak hours (i.e. utilization rate of 85%) and to maximize government revenue, the average daily peak-hour utilization rate of parking spaces for private cars,

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

van-type LGVs and taxis in the 11 government multi-storey car parks increased from 66% in 2013 to 90% in 2018. The utilization rates had exceeded TD's target of 85% since 2015;

- (b) while parking fees of the government multi-storey car parks should be comparable with fees charged by nearby public car parks, the monthly parking fees for private cars and van-type LGVs in all the government multi-storey car parks were 15% to 34% lower than the average market rates of nearby public car parks according to a market research conducted by TD in July 2018;
- (c) while Audit's research of the parking fees in other public car parks revealed that the granting of concessionary rate for monthly parking for taxis was not common, TD had sold monthly parking tickets for taxis at a concessionary rate in the government multi-storey car parks since 1999 and the monthly parking fees only increased by 16% in the past 19 years;
- (d) monthly parking tickets in some government multi-storey car parks were sold on a first-come-first-served basis. Audit's site visits in November 2018 and January 2019 revealed that due to keen competition, overnight queues for the purchase of monthly parking tickets existed in four car parks;
- (e) the number of closed-circuit television ("CCTV") cameras in each of the 11 government multi-storey car parks varied from 4 to 43. In 2018, in 30 of the 37 incidents (for example, vehicle theft) which occurred in the government multi-storey car parks, no image was captured by the CCTV footage or the scene was not under the coverage of CCTV security systems during the occurrence of the incidents and thus no record could be provided to the Hong Kong Police Force for investigation;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- (f) there was a delay in replacing the car park management system²² at government multi-storey car parks as the system had already been used for more than 10 years and reached the end of its planned serviceable life. The number of breakdowns had significantly increased by 110% from 197 in 2016 to 414 in 2018; and
 - (g) while TD's car parks are designated as private roads under regulation 7 of the Road Traffic (Parking on Private Roads) Regulations (Cap. 374O), the Department of Justice considers it undesirable to handle abandoned vehicles in government multi-storey car parks by virtue of Cap. 374O;
- notes that:
- (a) TD has in collaboration with ArchSD and the Hong Kong Police Force embarked on a review of the provision of CCTVs in TD's car parks; and
 - (b) Commissioner for Transport has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 3.12, 3.23 and 3.29 of the Audit Report;

Management of on-street parking spaces

- expresses grave dismay and finds it unacceptable that there were inadequacies in the management of on-street parking spaces by TD, as evidenced by the following:
 - (a) while one of the principles of on-street parking spaces was that on-street parking should be metered and prices set to ensure that about 15% of the spaces were maintained empty, from 2015 to 2018, on average, the objective of maintaining the 15% parking space availability rate was not met in 15 (40%) of the 37 districts.

²² Car park management system ("CPMS"), comprising two linked-in operating systems, namely access control system and licence plate recognition system, is installed in each government multi-storey car park to control and monitor the entry and exit of vehicles. CPMS is a critical car park system owned by the Government for: (a) calculation of parking fees payable by car park users; and (b) maintenance of all revenue data generated by the car parks. CPMS is supplied and maintained by two system suppliers through sub-contract agreements signed with the car park contractors.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

In particular, the objective had not been met in many districts in Kowloon (i.e. 13 of the 15 districts in 2018);

- (b) while it was the Government's policy to revise parking fees regularly to maintain a "15% availability rate", TD had not revised the meter charges accordingly. In particular, in 10 districts with parking space availability rates persistently below 15% since 2015 (ranging from 1% to 6% in 2018), there were metered parking spaces in nine districts charging at \$2 per 30 minutes (i.e. the low rate), which was lower than the maximum parking fee of \$2 per 15 minutes (i.e. the high rate) as stipulated in the Road Traffic (Parking) Regulations (Cap. 374C). In some districts such as Kowloon City, some meter locations were very close to each other but the parking fees were different;
- (c) the metered parking fee evasion rate had remained at around 30% from 2015 to 2018, and there were 24 234, 28 796 and 21 935 cases found in 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively on meters installed in areas of high parking demand but collecting extraordinarily low amount of parking meter revenue;²³
- (d) while TD's review in 2012 on parking fees had concluded that meters charging the low rate should be standardized to charge the high rate, as at 31 October 2018, there were still 2 733 (15%) of the 17 898 metered parking spaces charging the low rate;
- (e) while a "longest parking period" for each transaction had been provided in the parking meters to discourage prolonged parking at on-street parking spaces, and TD had set out in its internal guidelines that parking meters for private cars and van-type LGVs should be of 30-minute duration in core commercial areas and two-hour duration at the outskirts, TD had not defined the term "core commercial areas". For many parking spaces which were located in commercial areas such as Causeway Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok, the proportion of two-hour meters for private cars and van-type LGVs parking spaces were 81%, 67% and 58% respectively. In some cases, parking meters with

²³ The contractor engaged by TD is required to provide monthly report to the Hong Kong Police Force on meters installed in areas of high parking demand but collecting extraordinarily low amount of parking meter revenue. The figures refer to the numbers of metered parking spaces included in the monthly report in the respective year.

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

different types of "longest parking period" for each transaction were installed on the same street;

- (f) TD had not required its contractor to conduct regular surveys to ascertain the occupancy situation of the parking spaces outside the operating periods of parking meters. In some cases, parking spaces provided for the same vehicle type in the same parking place had different operating periods. Moreover, TD has not set up a parking fee adjustment mechanism to establish an objective basis on adjustment of the parking meter configurations;
- (g) there was a delay in the replacement of current parking meters, which had been put in use since 2003-2004. These meters would need to operate for two to three more years, i.e. a total of about 17 years, which was much longer than their normal serviceable life of 7 to 10 years. As the production of the current model of parking meters had ceased, there were only a limited number of spare parking meters in stock for installation at new parking places. TD had to redeploy parking meters from low-utilized parking places to facilitate the implementation of metering at other parking places. However, there was a delay in redeployment of parking meters, for example, 212 parking meters covering 399 parking spaces with persistent low utilization from 2016 to 2018 had not been redeployed. In some cases, requests for installation of parking meters were not accepted due to insufficient spare parking meters;
- (h) there were abandoned vehicles found in on-street motorcycle parking spaces at 28 out of 100 parking places surveyed by Audit from November 2018 to January 2019, and illegal parking on pavements nearby, jeopardizing pedestrians' safety;
- (i) there were also cases of non-metered parking spaces occupied by abandoned vehicles or other objects as revealed during Audit's survey of non-metered parking spaces for vehicle types other than motorcycles from November 2018 to January 2019;
- (j) TD had not conducted regular surveys of non-metered parking spaces for vehicle types other than motorcycles to assess the need to install meters with a view to encouraging vehicle turnover and improving parking space availability rate. Audit's site visits to 10 parking places of non-metered parking spaces for vehicles

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

other than motorcycles from November 2018 to January 2019 revealed that the target of maintaining 15% parking space availability rate was not achieved. Moreover, TD had kept parking spaces in some locations (such as those near beaches or country parks) as non-metered despite their high demand in holiday seasons;

- (k) there were cases where both metered and non-metered parking spaces were provided in the same location; and
- (l) TD's inventory list of non-metered parking spaces was found inaccurate;

- notes that:

- (a) TD is monitoring the parking situation in Hong Kong and considers it appropriate to continue to adopt 15% vacancy of on-street parking spaces as a target;
- (b) TD is reviewing the charging level of metered parking spaces at the same locality with different parking fees with a view to unifying the rate as appropriate. The target is to complete the review by end 2019;
- (c) TD is conducting a review on the parking fees for meters charging the low rate of \$2 per 30 minutes, which is expected to be completed by end 2019;
- (d) TD is reviewing the "longest parking period" for each transaction of the existing parking meters, with a view to completing the review by end 2019;
- (e) TD has kick-started preparatory work for installation of new parking meters by phases starting from the first half of 2020. Its backend system will provide real-time information on metered parking spaces being occupied but without payment of parking fees; and
- (f) Commissioner for Transport has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 4.19 and 4.30 of the Audit Report;

Implementation of parking-related technology initiatives

- expresses dismay and finds it unacceptable that there were inadequacies in the dissemination of parking information via TD's dedicated website and its "HKeMobility" mobile application, as well as the Public Sector Information Portal ("PSI"), as evidenced by the following:
 - (a) the location information of car parks shown in the dedicated website and mobile application was incomplete. Of 2 071 car parks providing public parking spaces as at 31 December 2018, TD's mobile application only showed information on the location of 1 546 (75%) car parks;
 - (b) while TD had approached three government departments (i.e. Government Property Agency, Housing Department, and Leisure and Cultural Services Department) in 2015 and 2016 to solicit their support in providing parking vacancy information, the outcome was not satisfactory. Of the 30 car parks in government venues with the highest number of public parking spaces (other than those managed by TD) as at 31 December 2018, parking vacancy information of only 7 (23%) car parks was available in TD's mobile application;
 - (c) TD's website and mobile application did not support the searching of on-street parking spaces;
 - (d) parking data uploaded to PSI was inadequate. For example, as at 31 December 2018, parking vacancy data of only 27 (10%) of 263 car parks (which provided parking vacancy information on TD's website and mobile application) was uploaded onto PSI;
 - (e) TD's dedicated website for providing parking vacancy information had not been enhanced to improve its usability on mobile devices; and
 - (f) while the development cost of "HKeMobility" mobile application was \$600,000, the expenditure incurred for the application's maintenance and enhancement since its launch in July 2018 amounted to \$1.84 million as at July 2019;

Planning, provision and management of public parking spaces

- expresses dismay and finds it unacceptable that there were inadequacies in the provision and management of electric vehicle ("EV") charging facilities by TD and the Environmental Protection Department, as evidenced by the following findings in the Audit Report:
 - (a) while there was a significant increase in the number of licensed private EVs in recent years (i.e. from 314 in December 2013 to 10 660 in September 2018), EV chargers had not been installed in three government multi-storey car parks (i.e. Aberdeen, Kennedy Town and Kwai Fong Car Parks); and
 - (b) Audit's site visits to the eight government multi-storey car parks equipped with EV chargers in November and December 2018 found that 168 (69%) of 242 parking spaces equipped with EV chargers were occupied by non-EVs; and
- notes that:
 - (a) upon completion of the system enhancement work in end 2018, the full set of car park data, including car park location information, has been uploaded onto "HKeMobility" for dissemination to the public since February 2019;
 - (b) Government Property Agency, Housing Department, and Leisure and Cultural Services Department have agreed to incorporate new requirements during renewal of their car park management contracts to achieve the parking information dissemination in "HKeMobility". As at early September 2019, Government Property Agency has already taken steps to include new clauses into their two renewed car park contracts;
 - (c) the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department has taken forward the installation of Bay Guidance System at TD's car parks. It will complete the tender for the system by early 2020 and commence the installation works at TD's car parks in mid 2020 with a view to fully completing the project by early 2021;
 - (d) Commissioner for Transport has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraphs 5.13, 5.17 and 5.23 of the Audit Report; and

- (e) Director of Environmental Protection has agreed with Audit's recommendations in paragraph 5.17 of the Audit Report.

<p>Follow-up action</p>

112. The Committee wishes to be kept informed of the progress made in implementing the various recommendations made by the Committee and Audit.