

香港特別行政區政府
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

運輸及房屋局

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12 February 2019

Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Housing
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road, Central
Hong Kong
(Attn : Mr Derek LO)

Dear Mr LO,

Panel on Housing

**Subcommittee to Follow Up the Issues Related to
the Wang Chau Development Project**

Email on 1 February 2019

Thank you for your email on 1 February 2019, attaching a list of follow-up actions arising from the fourth meeting of LegCo Subcommittee to Follow Up the Issues Related to the Wang Chau Development Project under Panel on Housing (the Subcommittee).

2. After consolidation of information gathered from relevant bureaux/departments, we provide a reply to the related issues as follows -

Response on Views of Deputations in the Meeting

3. The Government listened carefully to the views from representatives of various groups, individuals and Members, and answered questions and concerns of Members at the meeting.

4. Besides carrying forward Wang Chau Development Project, the Government had noted the concerns of the Legislative Council and the public on the arrangements of and related policy matters on animals which were affected by Wang Chau Development Project. Therefore, the Government had submitted a reply [LC Paper No. CB(1)533/18-19(01)] on relevant issues to the Subcommittee. The main points on animal welfare issues are as follows -

5. The Government's policy objective is to ensure that humans and animals co-exist harmoniously, whether in rural or urban areas. The Government has been promoting through public education the concept of giving due consideration to the long-term commitment before one starts pet-keeping; disseminating the messages of being a responsible pet owner and taking proper care of animals; and encouraging animal adoption.

6. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has established a dedicated team to devise and implement public education and publicity programmes to promote the messages of responsible pet ownership and taking proper care of animals. Regarding government development projects, AFCD has been working closely with relevant government departments to promote and appeal to those affected by these projects to make appropriate arrangements for their pets as soon as practicable (such as transferring their pets to relatives or friends); and make necessary preparation and to allow those affected by clearance exercises of developments to liaise with AFCD on this issue in a timely manner so as to enable AFCD and animal welfare organisations (AWOs) to make early preparation for receiving these animals. Specifically for the Wang Chau Development Project, AFCD visited various locations of the development in the past year to disseminate and promote the above messages and arrangements.

7. Also, AFCD has been collaborating with a number of AWOs to enhance animal welfare and encourage animal adoption. Generally speaking, animals received which are suitable for re-homing will be transferred by AFCD to AWOs for adoption by the public. AWOs will assess the suitability of a prospective adopter in order to ensure that the adopter will take proper care of the animal in the future. Adoption of animals received by the Government through AWOs can better address animal needs from the perspectives of animal welfare, health and disease control. AFCD will proactively liaise with AWOs to try and arrange them to accommodate animals affected by the development projects, and strengthen the work in animal neutering and adoption in the areas concerned.

8. While the “Trap, Neuter and Release” trial programme for stray dogs conducted earlier in two locations did not achieve the predetermined performance targets, AFCDC keeps an open mind towards rendering assistance to AWOs in conducting similar programmes in other specific locations. The Government will consider a range of factors, including population density, community facilities in the vicinity, and traffic condition, in order to determine if a specific location is suitable for conducting such a programme. Furthermore, as the coordinating AWOs and the carers concerned will need to be given relevant legislative exemption for conducting the programme, support must be gained from the local communities. AFCDC will facilitate the coordinating AWO’s liaison with the District Councils concerned as well as local stakeholders for introducing the programme, with a view to enlisting their support. AFCDC will also seek approval from the Legislative Council for the relevant legislative exemption.

9. On top of the above responses, for the proposal on setting up adoption centres for animals affected by development projects, in considerations of animal welfare and disease control, etc., the Government encourages those people affected by the development projects to make appropriate arrangements for their pets as soon as possible instead of keeping their animals in adoption centres on a long-term basis. AFCDC will provide assistance to those organisations interested in operating adoption centres. The organisations concerned may consider applying to the Lands Department for the use of vacant government sites or school premises and the related grant of a short-term tenancy (STT) under the existing mechanism for setting up such adoption centres. Besides, the Development Bureau will soon establish a funding scheme that will be open to applications. The funding scheme will provide the organisations, with the grant of a STT of these vacant government sites or school premises, with subsidies to support one-off, basic, and essential restoration works required to make the sites/premises fit for use.

Government to conduct Informal Consultation

10. In view of public concerns on the public housing development at Wang Chau, Yuen Long, the Government has expounded the relevant details of the public housing development at Wang Chau many times at different occasions to Members of the Legislative Council, Members of District Councils and the public, etc.

11. It is the Government's long-established consultation practice to conduct lobbying for projects that have impact to the local community with the objective to understand local concerns and gauge feedbacks on the proposals. The collected views are useful for the Government to formulate proposals and to better address concerns from the locals during the public consultation process. However, informal lobbying is not or cannot be intended for substituting formal consultation procedures. The Government has expounded the aforesaid arrangement many times.

Engineering Feasibility Study for Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for Phases 2 and 3 of Public Housing Development at Wang Chau, Yuen Long

12. The Engineering Feasibility Study is in its final stage. In view of its wide spectrum of development considerations and technical constraints, the Government is finalising the relevant reports and recommendations with the consultants, and aims to complete the study by the first quarter of 2019. Therefore, we are not able to provide the relevant information to the Subcommittee by 27 February 2019. The relevant information of the Engineering Feasibility Study will be available during public consultation for rezoning application thereafter.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed

(HONG Wing-kit, Michael)
for Secretary for Transport and Housing

c.c.

Secretary of Development	(Attn.: Ms Polly CHONG)
Secretary of Food and Health	(Attn.: Mr Bill WONG)
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation	(Attn.: Mr Kenny HO)
Director of Civil Engineering and Development	(Attn.: Mr Thomas CHAN Mr Fung-sing SIT)
Director of Housing	(Attn.: Mr Kenneth LEUNG)