

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

運輸及房屋局

香港九龍何文田佛光街 33 號



Transport and Housing Bureau

33 Fat Kwong Street, Ho Man Tin,
Kowloon, Hong Kong

本局檔號 Our Ref. HD(CEPWP)12/5/31

來函檔號 Your Ref.

電話 Tel No. 2129 3701

圖文傳真 Fax No. 3691 9899

20 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**

Motion passed at the Meeting on 1 February 2019

Thank you for your letter on 13 February 2019, attaching a motion passed at 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. The Government 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, and submitted a reply [LC Paper No. CB(1)533/18-19(01)] on relevant issues to the Subcommittee on 30 January 2019. The Government also listened carefully to the views from Members and the public at the fourth meeting of the Subcommittee on 1 February 2019, and submitted again a reply [LC Paper No. CB(1)584/18-19(01)] on 12 February 2019 addressing the list of follow-up actions arising from the fourth meeting to the Subcommittee.

3. Regarding the related issues in the motion, we have consolidated

information gathered from relevant bureaux/departments and provide a reply as follows -

4. 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. In this connection, 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.

5. Regarding government development projects except for baseline studies for wild plants and animals conducted for specific development projects on ecological grounds, relevant departments in general do not compile statistics on animals affected by development projects under the prevailing policy. Nevertheless, AFCD has been working closely with relevant government departments to promote and appeal to those people 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.

6. 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 could 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.

7. While the "Trap, Neuter and Release" trial programme for stray dogs conducted earlier in two locations did not achieve the predetermined performance

targets, AFCD 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. AFCD 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. AFCD will also seek approval from the Legislative Council for the relevant legislative exemption.

8. For the proposal on setting up adoption centres for animals affected by development projects, AFCD 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.

9. The mission of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) is to provide affordable quality housing to persons with genuine housing needs, including good management and other related services to meet the needs of tenants. In formulating the policy of animal keeping in Public Rental Housing (PRH) estates, the primary consideration of HA is to build a harmonious community whereby the different interests of all PRH residents are being respected at large.

10. PRH estates built by HA are of multi-storey building design and densely populated. As keeping dogs in PRH estates may induce noise and hygiene nuisance, the Tenancy Agreement (TA) stipulates that tenants cannot keep dogs in the premises without prior consent of the landlord.

11. Under the principle of not causing nuisance, apart from those dogs approved

under the “Temporary Permission Rule” arrangement¹, HA will grant discretionary approval for tenants with visual / hearing impairment to keep guide dogs and for tenants with the need of keeping dogs as mental support as recommended by medical practitioners to apply for keeping companion dogs.

12. In view of the increasing demand of tenants for quality of life and environmental hygiene in estates, in formulating animal keeping policy, HA must look after the overall interests and aspirations of all tenants and good management. For prospective tenants awaiting allocation of PRH flat, even if they are keeping dogs all along, they should be treated on par with other tenants and comply with the same terms of the TA after they have been offered PRH flats such that a harmonious community can be upheld. Therefore, HA has to maintain the existing dog keeping policy in PRH estates at the present stage.

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)
Director of Housing	(Attn.: Mrs Harriet LAU Mr Kenneth LEUNG)

¹ HA endorsed the implementation of a one-off Temporary Permission Rule in 2003 allowing tenants to continue keeping their small dogs already existed in PRH flats before 1 August 2003 until the dogs' natural death.