

Dr Honourable Helena Wong Pik-wan  
Office of Dr Helena Wong (Kowloon West),  
Room 912, Legislative Council Complex,  
1 Legislative Council Road,  
Central, Hong Kong

12 September 2019

Dear *Helena,*

I refer to your letter dated 29 August 2019.

First let me state again that there were no safety issues or injuries arising from the water ingress to the Construction Site of L1 Works Contract for Lyric Theatre Complex and the Extended Basement. Nor has there been any impact on the neighbouring community. I want to assure you that the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (the Authority) will continue to work closely with the appointed works contractor and concerned statutory authorities at all times.

The Authority has been working with the responsible contractor to ensure that all measures have been taken since the incident to further strengthen the monitoring of all works on the site. In addition, additional action has been taken to mitigate the risk of further water incursion, including continued grouting and strengthening the soil berm at the base of the excavation.

On 23 August, following good progress with the agreed remedial measures, works resumption outside the incident area was approved by the Buildings Department following their satisfactory review. As part of the enhanced monitoring, we have increased the frequency of site safety patrols and a 24-hour grouting standby team has been set up to provide a rapid response to any future incident of this type. I must caution, however, that below ground conditions in a deep excavation are always challenging. In this case made more complicated by the work being undertaken adjacent to the harbour. The Authority's works contractors must remain vigilant to ensure that, as in this incident, any problems are identified quickly and dealt with promptly.

You ask about the methodology used in this project. For your reference, Pipe-pile wall and grout curtain cofferdam were approved by the Buildings Department as the methodology to be used in this project. I would add that the design and construction of the building works in this project have fully complied with the relevant provisions of the Buildings Ordinance and its subsidiary Regulations.

All West Kowloon building works are subject to multiple independent inspections throughout the development period. An updated report has been submitted to the Buildings Department on remedial measures that will be taken in the incident area. A full account of details and development update of the project will be submitted to the Legislative Council (LegCo) Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project (JSC) in due course. I can say that the incident has had no impact on the programme for the delivery of the Lyric Theatre Complex.

I want to end by addressing your request for a site visit. Safety is our top priority. Access to building sites in Hong Kong are governed by the provisions under the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, and Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. Safety restrictions apply and must be adhered to at all times. We do arrange site visits occasionally. When we do so, we must do so with the agreement of the site controller and we usually insist that work stops for the period of the visit to ensure the safety of visitors. With our unwavering focus on safety, the Authority has maintained a good safety record across all our sites. As work has now restarted on the site, and in order not to disrupt the contractor at this time, I am not in a position to agree to a site visit for you now. However, I have offered to arrange a site visit for all LegCo JSC Members and others in November 2019 to keep them abreast of the latest development of the West Kowloon Cultural District as part of our regular briefing on the project. I hope you will join that visit to see for yourself what is happening on the site.

I emphasise our determined effort to communicate what has happened and what we have done, followed by reports and communications to the statutory authorities, Members of the LegCo and District Councils. As such, I would remind you that information on the latest situation and progress of the project has been provided to your office on 25 July, 13, 26 and 28 August respectively. The Authority will continue to be fully transparent and open as we always are.

Yours sincerely



Duncan Pescod

Chief Executive Officer

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

c.c. Home Affairs Bureau  
Buildings Department  
LegCo Secretariat