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5 March 2020

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Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Doris Lo)

Dear Ms Lo,

**Public Works Subcommittee Meeting on 4 December 2019
Follow-up matter relating to District Library and Residential Care Home for the
Elderly in the Joint User Complex at Lei King Road;
Hoi Sham Park Extension in Kowloon City District
(PWSC 2019-20)12**

At the request of the Legislative Council Public Works Subcommittee,
the supplementary information is attached at Annex for Members' reference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elania', written in a cursive style.

(Ms Elania Luk)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

Public Works Subcommittee Meeting on 4 December 2019
Follow-up matter relating to District Library and Residential Care Home for the
Elderly in the Joint User Complex at Lei King Road;
Hoi Sham Park Extension in Kowloon City District
(PWSC 2019-20)12

I. Supplementary Information Requested by Members at the Meeting

Follow-up item 1: For Project 58RG – District Library and Residential Care Home for the Elderly in the Joint User Complex at Lei King Road –

- (a) **The Government shall provide the respective floor areas of the dormitories, dining rooms / common areas / activity and training rooms and offices of the proposed Residential Care Home for the Elderly (RCHE), their ratios to the total floor area of the RCHE and their distribution; and**

The proposed RCHE is provided in the 6-storey Joint User Complex (the Complex) at Lei King Road. Located on the third to fifth floors of the Complex with a net operational floor area (NOFA) of about 2 058 m², the RCHE will provide 200 residential care places for the elderly. The RCHE on the fourth and fifth floors will be equipped with facilities like dormitories, dining rooms / common areas, activity/training rooms, physiotherapy rooms / exercise / occupational therapy areas, while the provision of a general office of the RCHE, staff facilities, a kitchen and a laundry will be on the third floor. The premises are built according to the site-specific Schedule of Accommodation for the RCHE in the Complex, the facilities provided for residents there, including dormitories, dining rooms / common areas, activity/training rooms and physiotherapy rooms / exercise / occupational therapy areas, occupy a total NOFA of 1 700 m², accounting for 82.6% of the total area of the RCHE, while the NOFA for the general office is 48 m², taking up 2.3% of the total area of the RCHE. The remaining 310 m², accounting for 15.1% of the total area of the RCHE, will be mainly for ancillary facilities including a kitchen and a laundry.

- (b) **The Government shall confirm whether the provision of a small library will be officially included in the review of facilities under the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG). If so, what is the estimated timetable?**

The HKPSG provides general guidelines for the Government to follow when determining the scale, location and site requirements of various land uses, community facilities and infrastructures based on the demographic and other factors. The HKPSG also aims to provide general guidance for the Government, during the planning process, to reserve sufficient land for social and economic development

purposes, and to provide appropriate public facilities to meet the needs of the public.

According to Chapter 3 “Community Facilities” of the HKPSG, the prevailing standard for providing libraries is that one district library should be provided for each district and for every 200 000 persons.

When planning and preparing for public library, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will take into account various factors, such as the location, ancillary transport facilities and demographic characteristics of the district/community, the utilisation of existing libraries, the development plan of infrastructural and community facilities of the district, the changing needs (including demographic changes) of the community and the cost-effectiveness of the services.

In addition to the major and district libraries which serve as the backbone of the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) network, small libraries and mobile libraries are provided to serve those communities distantly located from a major or district library or having difficulties in providing a major or district library. Small libraries mainly serve to supplement the services of a major library and a district library for the purpose of enhancing the library network in various districts. Having regard to the specific circumstances of different districts, the LCSD will take into account other relevant factors when deciding whether to enhance the public library services in a particular district through the provision of additional small/mobile libraries or the expansion/reprovisioning of existing libraries, etc.

Apart from the provision of physical libraries, the LCSD has been providing and enhancing public library services through multi-pronged measures in recent years such as actively developing library e-services to make library e-resources readily accessible to readers. Besides, self-service library stations have already been set up at the Island East Sports Centre, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Tsuen Nam Road at Tai Wai respectively to provide members of the public with round-the-clock services such as payment, borrowing, return and collection of reserved library materials. The LCSD also launches the “Joyful Reading at Your Neighbourhood: Library-on-Wheels” Pilot Project from January this year to March 2023 to innovatively provide small mobile library services by deploying mobile libraries flexibly in different hours to locations with heavier pedestrian flows but far away from existing library facilities, or by tying in with major community events. At the same time, the LCSD is committed to developing a “Smart Library System” to enhance the quality, cost-effectiveness and accessibility of facilities and services in support of the development of a smart city in Hong Kong.

As the provision of a new library involves heavy investment of resources, the Government has to carefully consider the overall resource allocation and to ensure that all resources can meet the long-term requirements. The LCSD has formulated a strategic plan to enhance the facilities and services of public libraries for 2020-2025, with a view to delivering and enhancing the services through more and different means. The Government considers it inappropriate to set a rigid standard in the

HKPSG for the provision of a small library. Setting such a standard may result in ineffective use of resources during implementation, and may also make it impossible to have a proper planning in response to the actual circumstances (such as geographical location, transport network, demographic characteristics and the utilisation of existing libraries) of a particular district to meet its own needs. The Government will pay close attention to the development needs and expectations of individual communities, continue to make an effort to develop the library network where resources allow, and actively consider providing library facilities in suitable government joint-user complexes.

Follow-up item 2: Regarding Project 441RO - Hoi Sham Park Extension in Kowloon City District, the Government shall indicate whether consideration will be given to the provision of a swimming shed near the promenade of Hoi Sham Park in Kowloon City District for use by members of the public. If not, please state the reasons.

The Government attaches great importance to swimming safety and urges members of the public not to swim in places not attended by lifeguards. LCSD manages a total of 44 public swimming pools and provides lifeguard services at 38 gazetted beaches. These swimming venues are provided with facilities such as toilets, changing rooms and shower areas, etc., for the convenience of swimmers. Lifeguard services are provided by LCSD throughout the opening hours of public swimming pools and gazetted beaches. In addition, shark prevention nets have been installed at gazetted beaches to protect the safety of swimmers.

Regarding the proposal of providing a swimming shed near the promenade of Hoi Sham Park, we reckon it necessary to consider whether a suitable and safe swimming environment can be provided to members of the public using these facilities so as to protect the safety of users. Located at the To Kwa Wan waterfront, Hoi Sham Park and its extension portion are adjacent to the Kowloon City Ferry Pier and To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter. The nearby waters serve as a channel for vessels. They are areas of heavy traffic with large vessels such as ferries, barges, etc. The busy marine traffic poses serious threats to swimmers.

Besides, the extension portion of Hoi Sham Park involves concrete vertical walls and large drainage outfall. The outfall may lead to strong currents or even extremely abrupt flood especially during or after a rainstorm, sweeping swimmers away. The flood will also result in contamination and affect the health of swimmers. Other conditions along coastlines, such as seabed conditions (e.g. whether there is silting), swells generated by passing vessels, floating contaminants in waters, etc. will also pose dangers to swimmers. In addition, although the overall water quality of Victoria Harbour has been improved obviously, some nearshore area such as the area adjacent to the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter is still affected by the sewage emitted from the drainage and the related odour. The water quality still could not reach the standard of gazetted beaches and therefore not suitable to be opened to the public for swimming. Given the above reasons, we consider it not advisable to provide a

swimming shed near the promenade of Hoi Sham Park to avoid posing dangers to users.

That said, the Government is actively promoting water-friendly culture, and put forward proposals to promote co-use of water body and water-friendly culture in two feasibility studies at the Kwun Tong Action Area on both sides of the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter and the Kai Tak Runway Tip. The proposals include the introduction of short, medium and long-term water body co-use proposals in the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter, such as widening the navigation area of the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter along the Kwun Tong Promenade to release more space for water recreational activities, providing venues at the Kwun Tong Promenade and the shores of the Kai Tak Runway Tip (i.e. situated respectively at the part of land at “Fly the Flyover 04” under Kwun Tong Bypass, as well as the part of land at the former airport fire station and the lower embankment at the Kai Tak Runway Tip) to allow non profit-making sports organisations to apply for using the venues concerned for water sports through short-term tenancies, and set up water-friendly theme facilities at the Kai Tak Runway Tip.

LCSD currently has three swimming pools in Kowloon City District, i.e. Kowloon Tsai Swimming Pool, Tai Wan Shan Swimming Pool and Ho Man Tin Swimming Pool. There is no shortfall in swimming venue in the district according to the standard of provision proposed in the HKPSG. Tai Wan Shan Swimming Pool at Hung Hom, situated in the vicinity of Hoi Sham Park, provides comprehensive swimming pool facilities for the local residents. In addition, LCSD is planning to redevelop Kowloon Tsai Swimming Pool to provide an indoor heated pool. Subject to the funding approval of the Legislative Council for the project, the works is expected to complete in 2024. By then, apart from using the indoor heated pool in Ho Man Tin Swimming Pool, residents of the district may also go swimming in Kowloon Tsai Swimming Pool during winter.

II. Other Recommendations from Members

(a) Whether fitness equipment suitable for use by adults, e.g. chin-up, could be added on top of those for the elderly

The fitness corner in the project will also provide fitness equipment suitable for use by adults on top of those for the elderly. Possible options include chin-up, balance bar, horizontal bar, pull-up, sit-up board, squat exercise rack, balance beam, etc. An area of around 151 m² to 240 m² has been reserved in the current design for installation of fitness equipment.

(b) Whether children cycling ground can be included

After detailed study, we consider that there is sufficient space for providing

a children cycling ground, proposed to be located at the north of the new children's play area, with an area of about 250m² for public enjoyment.

(c) Whether children can ride tri-cycle and balance bike within park area

The Government has encouraged families to use various park facilities, thereby adding vibrancy to parks. In recent years, quite a number of parents like to bring their toddlers to the parks and have fun on small toy tricycles. The tricycles designed for use by toddlers are of small size with limited speed. At present, toddlers are allowed by venue staff to ride tricycles under the supervision of adults as long as they do not cause any nuisance to other users nor damage venue facilities.

LCSD has launched a pilot scheme in August 2018 to select one venue in each of the 18 districts provided with flat wide open spaces for toddlers to ride balance bikes. The pilot scheme becomes a permanent arrangement following its successful implementation. LCSD will open up more leisure venues for toddlers to ride balance bikes having regard to the demand of local residents and site conditions after gaining support from the respective District Councils. Subject to the support of the Kowloon City District Council, LCSD will open up Hoi Sham Park for toddlers to ride balance bikes.