



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

Our Ref. : FHB/H/19/102 pt. 27
Your Ref. :

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8 October 2021

Clerk to Finance Committee
(Attn: Mr Frankie WOO)
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr WOO,

**Public views on construction of a new academic building
on an extension site east of No. 3 Sassoon Road**

I refer to your email dated 6 October 2021. Regarding the views submitted by Mr Paul Zimmerman, Vice Chairman of Southern District Council, on the construction of a new academic building on an extension site east of No. 3 Sassoon Road, the Government's response after consultation with the University of Hong Kong is set out at **Annex** for Members' perusal please.

Yours sincerely,

(Ricky WU)

for Secretary for Food and Health

Annex

The Government's response to Mr Paul Zimmerman's views on the University of Hong Kong's construction of a new academic building on an extension site east of No. 3 Sassoon Road

In response to Mr Paul Zimmerman's comments, we have consulted the University of Hong Kong ("HKU") and our reply is as follows.

Response to item (1)

2. The proposed scheme has taken into account various planning and technical considerations, including the existing site and surrounding context, structural and engineering feasibility. Temporary working platforms could be constructed by contractor to provide flat working, staging and storage areas without occupying the existing access road. The engineering industry in Hong Kong has plenty of experience to overcome hilly sites such as the buildings adjacent to the site concerned which is also constructed on hilly terrain.

Response to item (2)

3. In respect of the application for amendment of plan submitted by HKU to the Town Planning Board ("TPB"), according to the information available for public inspection, TPB received a total of about 2 670 submissions of comments during the first three weeks of the statutory public inspection period, of which more than half of the comments received supported the application and mentioned the benefits of the project to Hong Kong's healthcare system. Organisations in support of the application include Our Hong Kong Foundation, the Hospital Authority, Hong Kong Centre for Public Policy Studies, over 35 patient groups / associations, as well as numerous environmental and green organisations. The application is tentatively scheduled to be deliberated by TPB on 15 October 2021.

Response to item (3)

4. The proposed site is chosen with due consideration to its physical linkages with existing teaching facilities at No. 3, 5 and 21 Sassoon Road, which in the long term will be connected by elevated walkways as an integral part of the medical campus and in close proximity to the Faculty's flagship teaching hospital – Queen Mary Hospital ("QMH"). These locations together with other venues along Sassoon Road will form a strong network of teaching facilities, enhance synergy between professoriate / clinical staff and students, and facilitate frequent travel between these venues. Close proximity and reasonable walking distance from

the teaching venues on Sassoon Road back to QMH within a short time is extremely crucial for clinical teaching staff due to their professional obligations to attend to emergencies and patients' need in an urgent manner whenever called for. The proposed site is therefore best serving the needs of students, teachers and patients in QMH.

5. It is also critical to conduct research work involving the use of clinical specimens from QMH in close proximity to the cutting-edge research platforms at Sassoon Road, where research expertise, laboratories and core facilities, e.g. omics, imaging, Good Manufacturing Practice laboratories, laboratory animal unit, etc. are located.

6. The suggestion of using other remote sites for development will greatly compromise teaching and learning effectiveness due to the unique requirements of the medical curriculum. For instance, immediately after bedside teaching and after shadowing at the operating theatres at QMH, debriefing and discussion sessions should be carried out with the students. With 35% increase in medical student number, such clinical teaching sessions cannot be carried out at QMH due to lack of space, but have to take place at teaching venues close to QMH. It is not desirable to have medical students and clinical teachers running around and commuting between multiple sites daily for routine teaching / clinical-related activities that can be carried out in one consolidated location that encompasses Sassoon Road and QMH.

7. In consideration of redevelopment of existing buildings, all teaching and research facilities at the Sassoon Road campus are fully occupied. In order to set off the plan of remodelling or redevelopment of current facilities / old buildings, fully equipped decanting sites have to be made available as the current teaching and research activities cannot be stopped and compromised.

8. Furthermore, other sites in close proximity to the Sassoon Road Campus and QMH are considered not suitable in view of the limitation in site area to accommodate the required facilities with specific building footprint and technical requirements to meet with the ongoing increase of student numbers in the future.

Food and Health Bureau

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