

Islands District Council

Paper IDC 112/2009

Redevelopment of Chi Ma Wan Prison Area

Purpose

This paper briefs the Islands District Council on the redevelopment of Chi Ma Wan prison area and seeks Members' views on the redevelopment project.

Background

2. As an integral part of the Hong Kong criminal justice system, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) detains persons committed to its custody in a secure, safe, humane and cost-effective manner and in a decent and healthy environment. Moreover, in order to help reduce crime and protect the public, the CSD also provides suitable rehabilitative services for inmates to facilitate their rehabilitation. To achieve these objectives, the CSD needs adequate correctional institutions to provide enough penal places and suitable rehabilitation facilities.

3. Over the years, the CSD has endeavoured to address the problems of prison overcrowding and outdated penal facilities. With the concerted efforts of the parties concerned, the problem of prison overcrowding has been eased to some extent while the problem of outdated, ageing and archaic facilities in some of our penal institutions remains unresolved. Of the 23 existing penal institutions, eight of them were converted from buildings previously used for other purposes; and ten of them will be over 40 years old by the year 2010 and the number will increase to 15 by the year 2015. Some of the facilities of these institutions are outdated and have already shown signs of ageing and are beyond economical repair. While the CSD has so far been able to provide the necessary services for inmates, there is a need to upgrade some of these old facilities so as to meet the changing demands in prison management and offender rehabilitation.

The Prison Development Plan

4. In addressing the problem of outdated and ageing penal facilities, we commenced the redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institution in 2007. The project is now under construction and is scheduled for completion in 2010. We intend to implement an in situ redevelopment plan within the Chi Ma Wan prison area upon the completion of the redevelopment of Lo Wu Correctional Institution.

The Existing Chi Ma Wan Prison Area

5. With a total area of 241 000 square metres, the Chi Ma Wan institutions are situated at Chi Ma Wan Peninsula of southeast Lantau Island. However, the area that can be used for development purposes is only 33 350 square metres as most of the remaining areas are slopes and vehicle access roads. There are two female institutions within the area, i.e. Chi Ma Wan Correctional Institution and Chi Sun Correctional Institution. Converted from a convalescent home built in 1958, the former is a medium security institution with a capacity of 312. The latter is a minimum security institution with a capacity of 350 and the site was formerly a temporary camp for Vietnamese boat people built in 1979. Currently, the two institutions provide 662 penal places in total.

Redevelopment of Chi Ma Wan Prison Area

6. The following is a brief introduction of the redevelopment of Chi Ma Wan prison area:

6.1 Redevelopment area

The redevelopment occupies an area of about 33 350 square meters (see Map 1). The existing buildings will be demolished and new facilities will be built in situ. There will not be significant alterations to the existing slopes.

6.2 Redevelopment works

One medium security institution with a capacity of 400 and one minimum security institution with a capacity of 400 will be built. With a total of 800 penal places, the two new institutions will provide 138 additional places as compared with the existing ones.

6.3 Economy of scale

Economy of scale could be achieved if the two existing institutions in Chi Ma Wan are redeveloped in situ for purpose-built institutions. The CSD will adopt the most suitable design, technology and security system to reduce the staffing requirement. Moreover, in order to facilitate the implementation of rehabilitation services, the new Chi Ma Wan institutions will be equipped with various rehabilitative facilities, including multi-media training rooms, vocational training workshops and counselling rooms.

6.4 Minimising impacts of the redevelopment

In order to minimise the visual impact on the surrounding areas, the building height

of most buildings in the redevelopment is limited to five-storey or below. Studies to assess the impacts of the redevelopment project on the environment, traffic and drainage systems will be conducted to minimise the effects on the surrounding environment.

6.5 Rehabilitation and community services

Upon the completion of the two correctional institutions in Chi Ma Wan, better custodial services and more comprehensive rehabilitation services will be provided. In addition, the CSD will maintain community liaison as with before by implementing the Personal Encounter with Prisoners Scheme and arranging community groups to visit the institutions. We will continue to maintain a good and harmonious relationship with the local community.

Project Cost and Timetable

7. The project cost is estimated to be about HK\$2,580 million. The Administration plans to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee in the 2010-11 legislative session. Subject to funding approval, the project is expected to commence in 2011 for completion in 2014.

Advice Sought

8. Members are invited to express views on the redevelopment project.

Correctional Services Department

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