

**Standing Item of the 14th Meeting of the
Central and Western District Council (2012-2015)**

Progress Update on Various Projects under “Conserving Central”

Central Police Station (CPS) Compound

The Government is taking forward the revitalisation of the CPS Compound in partnership with the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC). HKJC has completed foundation pile tests for the new buildings, and is carrying out conservation works for the historic buildings, infrastructure works within the Compound and road improvement works adjacent to the site. The revitalisation works are scheduled for completion in 2015.

2. The foundation works, ground strengthening / grouting works, as well as pile tests for the two new buildings (Arbuthnot Wing and Old Bailey Wing) have been completed. The contractor is preparing for building an art storage basement in the Old Bailey Wing. The structural works for the pile caps of the Arbuthnot Wing are largely completed.

3. Regarding the restoration works for the historic buildings, Conservation Architects have developed a detailed restoration plan for the Police Headquarters building based on extensive research information. In accordance with the restoration plan, natural terracotta-coloured pantiles were used to replace the bitumen-covered tile roof of the building and its dull grey façade was repainted beige. Furthermore, the blue paint which was applied on the timber doors and windows in the late 20th century was removed, and the timber doors and windows were repainted brown on the outside and applied with clear varnish on the inside. These works restored the building to its original appearance as it was originally built. The restoration works for the timber doors and windows, roof and façade are completed and the scaffoldings have been removed. The interior works and the installation of building services are in progress. Restoration works on all other historic buildings will follow in accordance with schedule, in which the re-roofing of the Armoury, the Barrack Block, the Married Inspectors' Quarters and the Married Sergeants' Quarters has commenced. The structural strengthening works for D Hall and F Hall of the Victoria Prison have been completed and the project consultants will continue to monitor and inspect these historic buildings to ensure they remain structurally safe.

4. Regarding infrastructure works in the Compound, the foundation strengthening works for the Ablutions Block has been completed and the interior renovation and partition modification works for the building are proceeding in accordance with the plan to facilitate the installation of electrical and mechanical equipment there. Structural works for the underground plant room at the Parade Ground has been completed and the building services installations are being installed so as to minimise the interventions to the historic buildings. These works will not affect the in-situ underground remains of high heritage significance.

5. Regarding road improvements adjacent to the site, HKJC is carrying out the road works on Arbuthnot Road in accordance with the plan. The works include strengthening the stone-and-brick revetment wall on the site (Arbuthnot Road) and constructing a new pedestrian walkway along the western side of Arbuthnot Road, for the convenience of local residents and visitors. In order to maintain two-way traffic on Arbuthnot Road during the works period, the width of the existing pedestrian walkway on the east side of the road will be reduced. The temporary traffic management measures have been approved by the transport authorities and the neighbourhood has been informed. In addition, the plan for building a footbridge to connect the site to the Mid-Levels escalator system has been gazetted. We are now resolving the objections received.

6. In terms of preparation for site operation, HKJC announced in January 2014 the formal launch of the “request for proposals” (RFP) process to invite interested parties to submit proposals for the heritage and contemporary art operation and the food and beverage operations. Relevant information is available on the project website and has also been advertised in major newspapers and magazines. The RFP process was closed on 30 April 2014 and the proposals received are being processed for assessment by the selection committees set up in December 2013. The selection committees comprise individuals representing broad community interests to ensure that the heritage value and community interest are given full consideration in the selection process. The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust targets to appoint the operators in 2014.

Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road

7. The “PMQ” project, implemented by the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation Limited, its strategic partners and the Government, was commissioned in April 2014. Since commissioning, “PMQ” have organised a series of events. “PMQ” will also continue organising guided tours to introduce various historical spots on site, including the underground interpretation area showing the

foundation remains of the Central School, and two exhibition units displaying the evolution of the history of Hong Kong and Central School and recreating a police family in the old times for sharing the past life with visitors.

8. During the period of soft opening, “PMQ” has held a “missing person” activity. “PMQ” invited former residents, former members of the Junior Police Call Clubhouse and former students of the police primary school to participate in a re-union gathering to share their past life at the Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road, and invited them to provide artifacts for display.

9. Apart from the above events, “PMQ” has also launched various promotional activities through various platforms for promoting “PMQ”, such as introducing directional signage inside the Sheng Wan MTR Station, and hanging buntings and banners at the SOHO Mid-levels escalator in order to encourage visitors to use public transportation for visit. According to the survey conducted by “PMQ”, the number of visitors was about 200,000 for the first month since commissioning.

Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH)’s Compound

10. Under HKSKH’s preservation-cum-development proposal, HKSKH will preserve all four historic buildings at its Central site and replace other existing buildings by new ones to provide needed space for its religious and community services. In order to allow sufficient space for the provision of enhanced community services while reducing the development density at the Central site, HKSKH will relocate some of the existing uses and additional uses originally meant to be provided by redevelopment at the Central site to its Mount Butler site. HKSKH is reviewing its proposal for the Central site, including whether to develop a private hospital at the site. HKSKH is preparing the details of the revised proposal, and is consulting the relevant bureaux and departments. The Administration, together with HKSKH, will consult the District Council when HKSKH has come up with a more concrete revised proposal.

Former French Mission Building

11. We expect that the Former French Mission Building (FMB) will be available for adaptive re-use in 2015 after relocation of the Court of Final Appeal to the Old Supreme Court building at 8 Jackson Road, Central. The Department of Justice (DoJ) will then take over the Building and provide space in the Building for use by legal and dispute resolution institutions after the necessary renovation has been carried out. This arrangement is to facilitate such organisations to set up or develop services in

Hong Kong. This is in line with the government's policy as set out in the 2013 Policy Address to facilitate suitable international legal organisations as well as local law-related organisations to set up or develop services in Hong Kong. It would also enable the FMB and the former Central Government Offices (which will be used as the home for the DoJ and law-related organisations) to form a "legal hub", which is commensurate with the status and historical background of the FMB as a highly significant building and a declared monument.

12. The DoJ and the departments concerned are taking forward the preparatory works for the renovation of the Building. As set out in the DoJ's letter to the Central and Western District Council Secretariat of 13 January 2014, the DoJ will brief the District Council on the arrangement as well as the works required when the details are available.

Central Market

13. The "Central Oasis" is now a project undertaken by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). On 24 May 2013, URA submitted a planning application to the Town Planning Board in relation to the Central Market revitalisation project. The Town Planning Board (TPB) approved the planning application with conditions on 19 July 2013. As for the application for leave for judicial review against the decision of the TPB on the Central Market revitalisation project, the Court refused leave for the judicial review on 22 April 2014. Regarding the submission of the general building plans (GBP) for revitalising the market building, the Authorised Person appointed by the URA made amendments after liaison with the Buildings Department (BD) and resubmitted the GBP for approval by BD. URA's representative will provide further update the progress at the Central and Western District Council meeting on 29 May 2014.

Former Central Government Offices (CGO) Complex

14. The Government decided to adopt a re-use plan for the West Wing, under which the main body of West Wing will be preserved and renewed for use by the DoJ to accommodate its offices that cannot be relocated to the Main and East Wings, as well as for use by law-related organisations. The DoJ is working on the relocation of their offices to the Main, East and West Wings of the former CGO. The renovation works for the Main and East Wings commenced in July 2013. It is expected that the renovation works will be completed in the first quarter of 2015. For the works related to the relocation of the DoJ to the West Wing, the relevant Technical Feasibility

Study has been completed, and preparation work is being carried out by the relevant departments for the pre-construction works (such as site investigation and heritage impact assessment). The target completion time for the works is end 2017.

Murray Building

15. We announced the proposed development requirements and action plan on 2 March 2010. To pave the way for the conversion of Murray Building into a hotel, the Central District Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) was amended by rezoning the site to “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Building with Architectural Merits Preserved for Hotel Use” in July 2010. A set of development requirements to preserve the architectural merits of the Murray Building have been formulated, while detailed conservation requirements have also been set out in the tender conditions. The hotel site was successfully tendered out in November 2013.

New Central Harbourfront

16. We plan to develop Site 1 (i.e. the “Comprehensive Development Area” site adjoining Central Piers No.4 to 6) and Site 2 (i.e. the “Commercial” site north of International Finance Centre II) of the new Central Harbourfront into a distinctive civic node and mixed use precinct featuring low-rise structures for exhibition, retail, entertainment, civic and community use. The development of Sites 1 and 2 will take some time to materialise since different parts of the two sites are required for the works associated with the construction of the Central – Wan Chai Bypass before July 2015.

Development Bureau

May 2014