

Central and Western District Council (2015-2019)
4th Meeting

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 is carrying out construction works for the new buildings, 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 phases in 2016, after which the site will be available for fitting out and licensing arrangements by the operators, and for fitting out of the heritage interpretation and contemporary art aspects of the project. The Compound is expected to be open to the public by the end of 2016.

2. Good progress has been made in relation to the construction works of the two new buildings (i.e. auditorium on Arbuthnot Road and galleries on Old Bailey Street). In particular, works on the auditorium as well as works on the west-side façades of the galleries have been completed. Interior works and the installation of building services are close to completion and ready for statutory inspections.

3. Restoration works on the 16 historic buildings have been carried out in accordance with the restoration plan. Works for the timber doors and windows, roofs, façades, interior works and the installation of building services are close to completion and ready for statutory inspections. Two of the buildings, the Central Magistracy which has a complex configuration and the Married Inspectors' Quarters which is in a relatively poor condition, may require more time for restoration.

4. Regarding building services works in the Compound, fire service equipment has been installed and fire service inspections are underway.

5. With respect to road improvements adjacent to the site, all road works have been completed. Foundation works for building a footbridge to connect the Compound to the Mid-Levels Escalator and Walkway System are underway. The footbridge is scheduled for completion in mid-2017.

6. Regarding the selection of operators, good progress has been made and six appointed operators have been announced by February 2016. These include the police service centre with 24-hour access to the public, the integrated cultural and leisure operator for the Central Magistracy, a café operated by a social enterprise, and three food and beverage operators. The open call for proposals for the third batch of shop operators closed in mid-April 2016 with positive responses. Selection of other food and beverage and shop operators is in good progress and announcements will be made later.

7. Preparation for heritage and art programming is being made in earnest with input from the Heritage Working Group and Art Working Group. Heritage programmes include interactive tours, heritage interpretation showcases that engage through storytelling, diverse education programmes and thematic heritage exhibitions. There will be four to six curated art exhibitions and public programmes at the Compound every year that will see the collaborative participation of the art communities. Positive responses have been received in response to HKJC's earlier open call for proposals from art groups and organisations for Hong Kong contemporary art exhibitions. An assessment of the proposals is underway and the result is expected by mid-2016.

Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road

8. The "PMQ" project, implemented by the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation Limited, its strategic partners and the Government, started operating in April 2014. PMQ has organised a series of events, including the recent "detour 2015" and "Hong Kong on Steps". According to the survey conducted by PMQ, since its commissioning till the end of March 2016, the number of visitors was about 6.60 million.

Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH)'s Compound

9. 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 the 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.

10. Having taken into account the relocation of a public hospital (i.e. Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital) to another district, and the growing population arising from the development in the Central and Western District in recent years, HKSKH has reviewed its proposal for the Central site and decided to develop a non-profit-making private hospital. The hospital will offer local residents an alternative to the medical services provided by the public hospitals. HKSKH is working on the detailed design of the revised proposal, including the building bulk and height in order to provide not less than 274 numbers of patient beds as required by the Food and Health Bureau. HKSKH will also blend in the four historic buildings at the Central site in the design. The Government has requested HKSKH to take into account the views of the District Council when carrying out the above works. The progress of carrying out the above-mentioned design and assessments is satisfactory. When the detailed design is available, HKSKH will further consult the District Council regarding the revised proposal.

Former French Mission Building

11. The Court of Final Appeal was relocated from the former French Mission Building to the old Supreme Court building at 8 Jackson Road, Central in September 2015. The Building was temporarily used by the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water for conduct of hearings as well as the Commission Secretariat and the Judiciary for office use. The Department of Justice (DoJ) will take over the Building after completion of necessary procedures and provide space in the Building for use by legal and dispute resolution institutions, after carrying out the necessary renovation. This arrangement aims to facilitate such organisations to set up or develop services in Hong Kong, and is in line with the Government's policy as set out in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 Policy Addresses as well as the 2014 Budget Speech to facilitate suitable international legal organisations as well as local law-related organisations to set up or develop services in Hong Kong. It will also enable the Building and the former Central Government Offices (which will be used as offices for the DoJ and law-related organisations) to form a "legal hub", which is commensurate with the status and historical background of the Building as a declared monument.

12. The DoJ and the departments concerned are taking forward the preparatory works for the renovation of the Building. The DoJ briefed the District Council on the details of the proposed works of the project at the meeting on 10 March 2016.

Central Market

13. In September 2015, the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) decided on a simplified design for the revitalisation of the Central Market. The URA subsequently submitted a planning application in respect of the project to the Town Planning Board, which was approved with conditions on 18 March 2016. After obtaining the necessary approvals, the URA will commence the revitalisation project as soon as possible with a view to completing it early for public enjoyment.

Former Central Government Offices (CGO) Complex

14. The Government has 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 arrangements for the provision of accommodation support to the law-related organisations in the West Wing (and the former French Mission Building as mentioned above). The renovation works for the Main and East Wings were completed and some offices of the DoJ have been relocated there since the third quarter of 2015. For the works related to the relocation of the DoJ to the West Wing, apart from the relevant Technical Feasibility Study, a heritage impact assessment (HIA) on the renovation works was completed and submitted to the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) for discussion in March 2015. The findings of the HIA were supported by the AAB. The DoJ briefed the District Council on the details of the West Wing renovation works in May 2015. The DoJ also consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services at the meeting on 25 April 2016 on the renovation works for the West Wing, and the proposal was supported by the Panel. Relevant departments are making preparations for other pre-construction works (such as tendering and seeking funding approval). The target completion date for the works is end 2018.

15. On the arrangement of railings in the former CGO, the DoJ and the

Development Bureau (DEVB) provided written response in March 2016 to comments made by the District Council at the meeting in January 2016 and reported the latest progress. The District Council will be further briefed when the detailed arrangements have been worked out. As regards the railings and gates covered by the West Wing renovation project, the fence at the top of the slope within the West Wing site along Lower Albert Road will be lowered and the gate within the site will be replaced by drop-arm barriers for vehicular control, which is in line with the recommendations of the HIA report for the project.

Murray Building

16. We announced the proposed development requirements and action plan in March 2010. To pave way for the conversion of Murray Building into a hotel, the Central District Outline Zoning Plan 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. The Master Layout Plan (including the Traffic Review Report) and the Landscape Master Plan were approved in December 2014 and April 2015 respectively. The building plans submitted by the developer were also approved by the Buildings Department in February 2015. The DEVB and the Transport Department submitted the information on the traffic review of the project to the District Council in June 2015 for members’ reference. It is expected that the project will be completed by the end of 2018.

New Central Harbourfront

17. Based on the recommendations of the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront, Site 1 (i.e. the “Comprehensive Development Area” site adjoining Central Pier Nos. 4 to 6) and Site 2 (i.e. the “Commercial” site north of International Finance Centre II) of the new Central Harbourfront will be developed into a distinctive civic node and mixed use precinct featuring low-rise structures for exhibition, retail, entertainment, civic and community use. Part of Sites 1 and 2 is still required for the works associated with the Central – Wan Chai Bypass. The Harbourfront Commission (HC) has submitted its final report on the proposed establishment of a Harbourfront Authority to the Chief Executive. The DEVB will

work with the HC to consider the way forward.

Development Bureau

May 2016