

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

DEVB(PL)112

(Question Serial No. 1384)

Head: (118) Planning Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operating Expenses
Programme: (2) District Planning
Controlling Officer: Director of Planning (Ivan CHUNG)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

With a view to increasing housing, commercial and other land supply, the Department worked on different land use reviews, including the development of Tseung Kwan O Area 137 and Area 132 as well as the vacant and to-be vacant school premises. During the year, the Department completed a latest round of review of government, institution or community sites earmarked for standalone public facilities.

In the Budget Speech, the Government mentioned that vacant government sites and vacant school premises can be leased to non-governmental organisations through short-term tenancies. In this regard, how much time does the Government need to renovate the vacant school premises and put them on the market? Vacant government sites and vacant school premises can be provided to non-profit-making organisations for organising community activities or setting up social enterprises.

The Government is making every effort for enactment of legislation in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law and promotion of The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the National Security Law). Would the Government please inform this Committee if there is any consideration on converting a number of vacant government sites and vacant school premises into national security education centres for the purpose of promoting the National Security Law?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

According to Article 10 of the Hong Kong National Security Law, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall promote national security education in schools and universities and through social organisations, the media, the internet and other means to raise the awareness of Hong Kong residents of national security and of the obligation to abide by the

law. While the Government has no plan at this stage to make use of vacant government sites or vacant school premises (VSPs) to promote the National Security Law, we welcome various sectors of the community to provide national security education in different ways, thereby enabling citizens in understanding the importance of safeguarding national security.

To make gainful use of our scarce land resources, while pending implementation of the long-term uses, individual vacant government sites (including VSPs on government land) can be provided for short-term uses by government departments as well as non-government organisations (NGOs) for various community, institutional or non-profit-making purposes. As at 29 February 2024, 467 vacant government sites (including 61 VSPs) are available for short-term applications by NGOs. A list of vacant government sites under Lands Department's management and available for NGOs to apply for short-term use is uploaded onto the department's "GeoInfo Map" website (www.map.gov.hk/gm/map/search/faci/VGS).

When processing applications for short-term uses of these sites, the relevant policy bureau(x) would be consulted on whether policy support and/or concessionary rentals are granted for the proposed short-term uses involved. To make vacant government sites (including VSPs) fit for use, basic renovation and other enabling works may first be required before they can be put to use. The time required for the work would depend on the actual condition of the site and the nature and requirements of the proposed use. The Development Bureau currently runs a funding scheme that may subsidise successful NGO-applicants with one-off basis and essential restoration works required to make the vacant government sites including VSPs fit for use.

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