

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 2397)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding public market services, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the works progress of the 10-year Market Modernisation Programme; and
- (2) the under-utilised public markets closed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in the past 3 years, together with the dates of closure and the land use/development after closure; as well as the number of public markets planned to be closed in 2023-24, their names and the reasons for their closure.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. The Department is pressing ahead with 6 overhaul or redevelopment projects under the Market Modernisation Programme (MMP). The pioneering project is the overhaul of Aberdeen Market. The works officially commenced in November 2021 and will be substantially completed in the first quarter of 2023. The market will re-open afterwards.

The Government will also proceed with the overhaul of Lai Wan Market. The market was closed in February 2023 for overhaul works and is expected to re-open before the Lunar New Year in 2024 at the earliest.

In addition, the preparatory and consultation works for 4 proposed overhaul or redevelopment projects in Yeung Uk Road Market, Ngau Tau Kok Market, Kowloon City Market and North Kwai Chung Market are underway. Upon deciding on the scope of works, the Department will conduct technical feasibility studies with the relevant departments. The works timetable will be confirmed upon completion of the technical feasibility studies and assessment as well as the detailed design.

The MMP also includes minor refurbishment or improvement works to upgrade market facilities as soon as possible. Out of the 16 markets currently covered, the works in 14

markets (including Ngau Tau Kok Market, Yeung Uk Road Market, Fa Yuen Street Market, Quarry Bay Market, Shui Wo Street Market, Tsuen Wan Market, Mong Kok Cooked Food Market, Ngau Chi Wan Market, Shek Tong Tsui Market, Yan Oi Market, Sai Kung Market, Po On Road Market, Wong Nai Chung Market and Smithfield Market) have been completed. For the remaining 2 markets (Luen Wo Hui Market and Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market), the works or relevant preparatory works are underway, with completion expected in 2023 and in phases in 2024 respectively.

We will continue to identify more suitable markets for inclusion in the MMP, so as to improve the operating environment of markets.

2. With demographic changes, new development/redevelopment projects and competition from other fresh provision outlets, the appeal of some long-established public markets/cooked food markets (CFMs) has been diminishing over time with low patronage and high vacancy rates. With a view to optimising land use, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has been closely monitoring the utilisation of existing markets/CFMs and considering closing or consolidating under-utilised markets/CFMs, so that the vacated sites could be provided to other departments for better development, thereby benefitting the public. Various factors will be taken into consideration, including the vacancy rate, room for improvement, availability of fresh provision outlets in the vicinity, possible cost-effectiveness of upgrading works and the views of the local community, etc.

In the 3 financial years from 2020-21 to 2022-23, we have closed 2 markets with consistently high vacancy rates. The vacated buildings were handled according to the established procedures. Tui Min Hoi Market was closed in January 2021 and handed over to the Social Welfare Department for provision of elderly care services. Choi Hung Road Market, closed in March 2022, is located in the same building with other recreational and sports facilities that are still in operation. The Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) of the Development Bureau (DEVB) initially recommended redevelopment of the building for improvement of the recreational and sports facilities and integration of other uses such as district health centre, welfare facilities and underground public car park. It is actively studying the overall planning and long-term development of the site.

In addition, we plan to close Kwun Tong Ferry Concourse CFM in 2023-24. The site will be handed over to EKEO of DEVB for planning so as to tie in with the long-term development of the Kwun Tong Action Area.

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