

LCQ4: Planning of museums

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a reply by the Acting Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Raistlin Lau, in the Legislative Council today (Jan 10):

Question:

The Government has earlier on put forward the setting up of two museums about our country and the War of Resistance, with the museum showcasing the development and achievements of our country (the new museum) proposed to be set up by utilising the current site of the Hong Kong Science Museum (HKScM), while the HKScM is proposed to be reprovisioned at the current site of the Hong Kong Heritage Museum (HKHM). Some members of the public are worried that under the reprovisioning plan, the HKHM, which showcases the modern culture of Hong Kong and achievements of local performing artistes, will be lost in Hong Kong. Regarding the planning of museums, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the time for completing the planning exercise of the aforesaid museums, and the estimated completion time of the new museum and the reprovisioned HKScM;

(2) as the Government intends to construct a branch museum of the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) on a site in the vicinity of the Ocean Park Hong Kong (Ocean Park), and is considering integrating the existing collections of HKHM into HKMoA and the branch museum, of the collections to be integrated into the branch museum, and how such collections will be displayed during the transitional period before the commissioning of the branch museum; whether the authorities will consider strengthening the linkage between the branch museum and the Ocean Park, with a view to enhancing the travel and entertainment experience of visitors; and

(3) whether it will, through the current exercise involving the planning of multiple museums, respond to the views of society on the need to set up a "Bruce Lee Museum"?

Reply:

President,

To foster the cultural development of Hong Kong to expedite its progression into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) are currently reviewing the future development of museums, including planning for new museums, expanding or renovating existing museums, and defining the themes of the museums, with a view to optimising the overall development of museums in Hong Kong and further enriching the cultural landscape of the city. The prime directions for museum development

include the promotion of Chinese history and culture, pop culture, art, science, technology and astronomy, as well as the topics of interest to the general public. Our reply to the question raised by the Hon Dominic Lee is as follows:

(1) The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government would set up two museums about our country and the War of Resistance, one of which would focus on showcasing the development and significant achievements of our country over the years. Subsequently, we provided relevant information on the proposed arrangements for setting up the new museum to the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Home Affairs, Culture and Sports at its meeting in December. As we have clarified at the meeting, the Government will engage the LegCo and various stakeholders, and seek their views on the overall planning and future development of museums in Hong Kong. As a preliminary concept, the new museum should be located at a conveniently accessible site in the town centre to facilitate easy visits by the public, tourists and groups of school students. It will also require a relatively vast space for inclusion of various exhibition contents and better promotion of the world-renowned development and achievements of our country. We are working closely with the Development Bureau and other relevant departments to explore and identify the optimal site for the new museum while formulating appropriate plans for its contents, curatorial approach and implementation schedule. When designing and developing the contents of the new museum, we will consult relevant Mainland authorities or museums, and draw reference from their views and information.

(2) The rearrangement of the collections of the Hong Kong Heritage Museum (HKHM) by, for example, integrating the art-related collections into the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) and its proposed branch museum, is our preliminary concept at this juncture. That said, it is necessary to stress again that we do treasure every museum collection item greatly, and the LCSD will endeavour to provide space for displaying our collections having regard to donors' wishes and other factors. The preliminary identification of a site in the Southern District on Hong Kong Island for the proposed branch museum of the HKMoA has been made after considering the large number of art galleries setting foot in the district in recent years, and the official opening of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council's new premises in Wong Chuk Hang in July 2023. Setting up the branch museum of the HKMoA in the Southern District will further boost the cultural ambience of the district and facilitate the development of an arts hub there. By enriching the local cultural landscape, we will develop the Southern District into a place full of vibrancy for people to explore new ideas and have fun. Given the proximity of the branch museum to the Ocean Park, we will also consider collaborating with the Ocean Park to create a synergistic effect in cultural tourism, thereby broadening the audience base of the museum with more locals and visitors, and bringing more people to the Ocean Park.

(3) Hong Kong's unique pop culture, which covers film, television, music, martial arts and others, is an important cultural brand of its own. It demonstrates Hong Kong's characteristic fusion of cultural elements of the East and West, of the old and new, and of the high and low. It is also a

reflection of Hong Kong's creativity and charisma in integrating diverse cultures. With the launch of the Hong Kong Pop Culture Festival in 2023, the Government will organise the festival in collaboration with industry practitioners on an annual basis. In addition, the HKHM has reserved designated gallery for holding exhibitions and extension activities on Hong Kong's pop culture, with a view to expanding the collaboration network and building up collections for a powerful display of significant achievements in Hong Kong's pop culture. In the long run, to strengthen our focus on the collection and showcasing of Hong Kong's pop culture, we are contemplating a new museum site for relevant exhibitions and artefacts to set up a "Pop Culture Centre" as a landmark for pop culture and a tourist attraction to appeal to different groups of people including the younger generation and tourists. The Government adopts an open stance regarding the long-term planning of the future "Pop Culture Centre", and welcomes suggestions from stakeholders on the exhibition themes, contents and collections of the Centre for further study and consideration.

We understand the concerns about the future development of the museums of Hong Kong raised by the public and different sectors of the community. We expect to consult the LegCo and various stakeholders on the overall future planning of museums in Hong Kong and their development plans in the first half of this year.