

Submission to the Consultation Paper on Columbarium Policy

I live in Tsing Yi. I strongly object the columbarium policy in respect of the following issues:

(a) Objection of new columbarium facilities in Kwai Tsing district

I strongly object the 2 proposed new columbarium facilities in the ex-Kwai Chung Incineration Plant and the site on Kwai Tai Road, southeast of ex-Kwai Chung Incineration Plant, i.e. items 8 and 9 of the **Annex** attached to the consultation paper. Reasons being that these 2 new facilities will undoubtedly cause adverse effect in terms of visual and environmental impacts and social customs to the neighbourhood that residents in Tsing Yi can not tolerate.

Although Tsing Yi is separated by Rambler Channel from Kwai Chung; but given the short distance of the width of Rambler Channel, residents in Tsing Yi can see the ex-Kwai Chung Incineration Plant site so closely that we feel as a resident in the Kwai Chung neighbourhood, so any new facilities in one side of the Rambler Channel (Kwai Chung) will definitely affect residents in the other side of the Rambler Channel (Tsing Yi). Moreover, environmental nuisance is another concern - air pollution nuisance caused by burning activities of joss papers in columbaria will affect the health of residents in Tsing Yi. Prevailing wind will bring particulate matters, dust, odour and other chemicals as a result of the burning activities to the residential blocks in Tsing Yi that it will cause nuisance as well as adverse health effect to the residents. I understand the Government will try its best to control the air pollution emission from the columbaria by ways of installation of air pollution control equipment and enforcement of appropriate environmental laws, but please do not forget that this is NOT a **zero** emission, this is a **controlled** emission that although controlled, the emission is still there that it will cause nuisance and other environmental impact to the residents in Tsing Yi. Also, there is no infrastructural facilities and transportation support for the 2 proposed new columbarium facilities that people will find difficulty to gain access to the columbaria. On the other hand, no doubt that people do not like columbarium facilities, whether the facilities can be seen at a distance from people's residence or are built in the neighbourhood - it is a Chinese tradition that property price of the people's residential units will inevitably be adversely affected.

In short, I did not and never expect these new columbarium facilities when the time I bought my residential unit. I hate the columbarium facilities. If I knew, I definitely did not buy. If the Government goes ahead to build the said

.....\2

columbarium facilities without listening and understanding the residents' concern, I will sell out my residential unit – you force me to do so! I wish you could understand and address the concern and anxiety of myself and also the residents in Tsing Yi and urge that the proposed new columbarium facilities as mentioned above in Kwai Chung shall be abandoned.

(b) Objection to the idea that all districts should collectively share the responsibility to develop columbarium facilities

I strongly object the idea that all 18 districts should collectively share the responsibility to develop columbarium facilities. In practice, this **doesn't** work! Can you find new sites for columbarium facilities in densely built-up areas such as Tsimshatsui? Do NOT talk to me the small number of niches in temples and churches located in Tsimshatsui, I am talking about columbaria. Do you mean people living in Tsimshatsui can get allocation of niches (because no columbaria in Tsimshatsui) in other districts? The idea of reserving a certain portion of niches for priority allocation to local residents who are in need in a district is **NOT** working! I can get proof of address from my relatives or friends living in other districts say Chai Wan or Tseung Kwan O in order to get allocation of niches in that districts! There are many loopholes in securing the allocation which would cause confusion and unfairness among the 18 districts.

Traditionally and normally people do not mind traveling long distance to pay wisdom to their ancients in cemeteries or columbaria. People get used to travel a long distance for that purpose and there is no way, no wish and no excuse of finding a nich, or even cemetery, in the vicinity in which the surviving relatives or loved ones reside.

I strongly wish you could look into the matter, deeply and precisely, that you could understand the drawbacks and impracticability of the idea of all 18 districts collectively sharing the responsibility to develop columbarium facilities.

August 2010