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There is no point delaying work on green park at barren cultural hub site

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Last month Michael Lynch, the new chief executive of the West Kowloon Cultural District, announced a number of cultural events over the next few years on what is still a barren site.

It would appear he has not been adequately briefed.

Many of us who have attended wine and jazz festivals, New Year celebrations or even news conferences, at this virtually inaccessible and deserted site, have had some unpleasant experiences, particularly when weather conditions deteriorate, as there are no proper shelters.

Of course, after the 5,000 trees envisaged under the Foster + Partners' master plan are planted, they will take a few years to reach maturity and full foliage. But why can't the tree planting programme start now? Hong Kong has no shortage of horticulturists who can work under the direction of Lord Foster, who has championed environmental sustainability.

The Hong Kong Alternatives (a citizen advocacy group) is certain that under the Foster group's direction, local people with the appropriate kinds of talent can create a totally sustainable and environmentally friendly green park, along with all the necessary shelters and rest areas.

They can also provide attractive venues for the performance of art and other popular events, like the wine festival, jazz concerts, New Year countdown and other auspicious occasions.

We appeal to the government to establish an environmental fund to finance this green park project. All it needs to do is take out a fraction of its budget allocated for the arts and culture aspect of the district. We are confident that under the professional guidance of Mr Lynch, the money, time and effort spent on this West Kowloon green park during this transitional period would not be wasted.

We further appeal to the government to improve the much neglected access roads and footpaths to the cultural district site.

Visitors, young and old alike, find it very difficult to reach the park site and often get lost.

When special events are taking place, surely shuttle buses could be arranged from the Star Ferry or some designated MTR stations?

We hope the chairman of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, Henry Tang Ying-yen, will allow Mr Lynch to implement these measures. The green park development should be started now. It would be wrong to waste another three years.

K. N. Wai, on behalf of the Hong Kong Alternatives

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