Recently renovated: All the lifts servicing Menara DBKL 2 looks brand new and in perfect condition as sources revealed it was upgraded a couple of months ago.

Menara DBKL 2 to go

City Hall plans to carry out demolition plans following green light on project

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A MULTI-million ringgit Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) development project will proceed despite protests from stakeholders including KL MPs.

Mayor Datuk Mohd Amin Nordin Abd Aziz told *StarMetro* that City Hall would ahead with plans to demolish its Menara DBKL 2 in Jalan Raja Laut and rebuild it, despite criticisms from the public that it was a waste of taxpayer funds.

"Yes, we will be going ahead with the project as it has been okayed by the Government," he said.

When asked when the project would take off and if a tender had been called for, the mayor said the time frame had not been confirmed and no tender had been called yet.

According to several City Hall staff based in Menara DBKL 2, an internal memo had been sent out recently informing them they would be relocating by the end of December. The memo also advised them to start packing.

"We were told that by December, the building will be vacant, but we have not heard anything since; and it is already August," said a staff member who wished to remain anonymous.

According to another employee, the management had already identified office space in Wisma Cycle and Carriage, Jalan Raja Laut, for them to relocate temporarily, but so far there had been no other news about the move.

It is also learnt that Menara DBKL 2 tenant, Maybank Bhd, has also been given notice to vacate the building by December.

Last year, *StarMetro* reported on DBKL's plan to build a new tower as its headquarters in Jalan Raja Laut in place of Menara DBKL 2. The plan however did not go down well with city folk.

Former mayor Tan Sri Ahmad Phesal Talib defended the decision, saying that Menara DBKL 2 would be demolished and replaced with a skyscraper to create more office space, as DBKL intended to relocate all departments under one roof.

The announcement raised eyebrows and questions because the local authority had spent a substantial sum of taxpayers' ringgit on renovation and upgrading works in Menara DBKL 2 that were completed just some months prior.

The renovations included upgrading all the lifts and two sets of escalators in the 12-storey building, and refitting some of the departments as well as the toilets; the total costs was estimated to be at least a seven-figure amount.

DBKL bought the building about 10 years ago from the Selangor State Development Corporation.

It houses several departments including Licensing and Petty Traders Management, Urban Transport, Internal Audit, and Information Management.

The proposed skyscraper, estimated to cost a whopping RM500mil will use a design from Hijjas Kasturi Associates that the renowned architecture firm had submitted for a competition organised by DBKL. The design features four towers connected by bridges at various levels. The tallest tower is 57-storeys high.

The plan also includes two storeys of retail space and an open area for the public.

Ahmad Phesal had also said that all departments currently housed in Menara DBKL 3 in Jalan Raja Abdullah would be relocated to the new tower.

He added that Menara DBKL 3 would be rented out as it was in a prime location.

Currently, DBKL has three administrative buildings — Menara DBKL 1 and 2 located in Jalan Raja Laut and Menara DBKL 3, also known as Menara Wawasan DBKL less than 2km away in Jalan Raja Abdullah.

Several MPs have questioned the mayor's decision to build the new tower saying that it was a waste of taxpayer money. Many argued that DBKL should spend the money to build more public housing instead of more offices.

Seputeh MP Teresa Kok raised the matter in Parliament in March and Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Mansor had replied that the redevelopment was still in the planning stages and, if implemented, was expected to be ready after 2020.