

For consideration on
6 November 2000

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

Western District Development Strategy

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on the planning concepts of the Western District Development Strategy (WDDS).

WESTERN DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2. The WDDS covers a proposed reclamation off Kennedy Town, Sheung Wan, Sai Ying Pun and Kennedy Town. The details of the WDDS, including the development objectives and land use planning concepts, are set out in the attached Consultation Digest. The salient features are highlighted below.

SCALE OF RECLAMATION

3. In response to public views on the previous scheme, we have proposed in the WDDS a much reduced scale of reclamation. In particular, we have decided to preserve Green Island and Little Green Island and retain Sulphur Channel. The significantly reduced reclamation off Kennedy Town will produce 79 hectares of land for a population of 70,000, compared with 193 hectares for a population of

about 140,000 in the previous scheme.

REJUVENATION OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT

4. The extension of the MTR service to the Western District will provide impetus to the redevelopment of the area, either by the future Urban Renewal Authority (URA) or private developers. We plan to earmark a piece of land in the reclamation area which will be allocated to the URA for rehousing purpose.

5. The reclamation area will provide space to address the shortfall of community facilities and open space in the old urban area. We will facilitate the integration between the new reclamation area and the old urban area through provision of convenient access links and share use of community facilities and open space. Together with the proposed waterfront promenade and modern urban design, we aim to restructure the Western District as the Western Gateway to the Victoria Harbour.

ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY DESIGN

6. We shall minimize the construction and use of roads. Where possible, the roads will be covered. The development will be primarily served by the future Western Island MTR line. We shall create pleasant and convenient pedestrian walkways, which will be integrated with the open space network. We shall also study the feasibility of introducing travellers and other environmentally friendly facilities in the next stage of detailed design and engineering feasibility

study.

LAND FOR HOUSING IN THE URBAN AREA

7. The Western District Development (formerly called the Green Island Development) was identified as one of the important growth areas to meet Hong Kong's long term housing demand in the 1996 Territorial Development Strategy Review. The Western District Development area, being close to the Central Business District, is strategically located and suitable for accommodating additional population, particularly in the reclamation area.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

8. The WDDS also facilitates the provision of the Western Island MTR line, Route 7 and the possible strategic road and rail links to North Lantau in the future.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROTECTION OF THE HARBOUR ORDINANCE (THE ORDINANCE)

9. The Ordinance applies to the harbour off the Western District. Under the Ordinance, the harbour is to be preserved and protected as a special public asset and a natural heritage of Hong Kong people. In considering the proposed reclamation off Kennedy Town, we have given due regard to the presumption against reclamation principle in the Ordinance. Apart from providing land to accommodate population growth in the urban area, the proposed reclamation will also

support the provision of the MTR West Island Line Extension – a key transport infrastructure crucial to the future redevelopment of the Western District and long demanded by local residents and District Council. Moreover, the provision of an attractive and accessible harbour waterfront for public enjoyment, coupled with a completely new way of people-oriented urban planning, will provide an opportunity of developing this strategically located district into a new "Western Gateway" for Hong Kong. After thorough consideration, we have concluded that the public benefits of the proposed reclamation will outweigh the preservation of this part of the harbour.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

10. The public consultation exercise will last until the end of December 2000. We have widely distributed the Consultation Digest for public comments. Apart from a public consultation forum on 4 November 2000, we shall consult the Central and Western District Council and the Southern District Council. We shall also attend a number of local discussion forums on the WDDS organized by individual District Council Members and LegCo Members.

**Planning and Lands Bureau
October 2000**