For information

NOTE FOR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL

ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS

Summary of Public Views on
Western District Development Strategy

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting on 6 November 2000, Members requested the Administration to inform the Panel of the outcome of the public consultation on the Western District Development Strategy (WDDS) after its completion.

PUBLIC VIEWS

2.	During the public consultation period, both supportive views and objecting views as well as suggestions on the WDDS were received. Some of the views touched upon some fundamental issues which include:-

(i)	the extent of reclamation;
(ii)	the alignment and time frame of MTR extension;
(iii)	the possibility of providing a rail extension to Southern District;
(iv)	the tunnel alignment and portal location of Route 7; and
(v)	the relocation/retention/reprovisioning of existing waterfront activities including godowns, public cargo working area, wholesale food market, public filling barging point.

These views are briefly summarised in the following paragraphs.

Supportive Views

3.   The proposed significant reduction of reclamation limit from 193 hectares to 79 hectares was supported as it would enable the preservation of Green Island and Little Green Island. The proposed reclamation could provide land for the required community facilities as well as open space to the Western District as a whole.   The local residents generally expected that the proposed reclamation would accelerate the urban renewal process in the Western District by provision of re-housing opportunities to residents affected by urban renewal projects.

4.   Regarding the two major transport proposals, namely MTR West Island Line (WIL) Extension and Route 7, many urged for the early implementation of the WIL.   Some supported the Route 7 tunnel option for the section between Sandy Bay and Kennedy Town which the coastal area could be preserved.

5.   The planning concept with the provision of waterfront promenade and pedestrian escalator links, school village and stepped height profile for buildings on the proposed reclamation were supported.

Objecting Views

6. Some objected to the proposed reclamation as the justifications for the proposed reclamation for 70,000 people were not acceptable.   They considered that it would contravene the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance.   The significant narrowing and re-orientation of the Sulphur Channel would affect the marine traffic and the operation of the existing Refuse Transfer Station.

7.   Some objected to the construction of Route 7 with the concern that it would destroy the natural coastline and would be a source of air and noise nuisance to the existing waterfront buildings.   They considered that the traffic congestion mainly occurred at the bottleneck to Central District.   The proposed Route 7 could not improve the traffic circulation from the Western District to the Central and Eastern Districts.   They proposed Route 7 to be replaced by a rail link.

8.   Regarding the waterfront activities, some opined that the existing

incompatible waterfront activities should be relocated elsewhere to avoid conflict with the proposed waterfront promenade.   On the other hand, the current traders/operators in the Western Wholesale Food Market stressed that the market operation must be at-grade and they opposed strongly to redeveloping the market on a site with reduced size.

Suggestions

9.   Suggestions on the WDDS were also received.   They covers development issues such as the integration of old and new areas, alignments/ programmes of Route 7 and WIL, possibility of a light rail system linking up to the Southern District, extension of tram service to the reclamation area, conservation of heritage sites, reprovisioning of public cargo working area, resumption/compensation and implementation programme.

CONCLUSION

10.   The Government will take into account the public views received as well as the latest population projection and housing need of Hong Kong in considering the way forward.

Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
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