

**For discussion
on 7 December 2001**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS

Wan Chai Development Phase II

PURPOSE

The purposes of this paper are to brief Members on the key proposals of the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) project and to seek Members' support for commencing the detailed design and the associated site investigation work.

BACKGROUND

2. The primary objective of the WDII project is to provide land for key transport infrastructure, including a strategic Trunk Road (comprising the Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) and the Island Eastern Corridor Link (IECL)), MTRC's North Hong Kong Island Line (NIL) and the proposed Fourth Rail Harbour Crossing section of the Sha Tin to Central Link (SCL).

3. In early 2000, we consulted the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works, Wan Chai District Council, Eastern District Council, professional bodies and other concerned parties on a number of development options with regard to the alignment of the Trunk Road, the extent of reclamation and the land use proposals at the reclaimed area and adjoining hinterland. The option with least reclamation was generally preferred. The current development proposals are drawn up based on public's preference of minimum reclamation and other views received during the public consultation. A plan showing the proposed land uses, new roads and pedestrian connections is attached at **Enclosure 1**.

SCOPE OF THE WDII PROJECT

4. The scope of the WDII project comprises:
- (a) reclamation of about 28.5 hectares of the seabed along the existing coastline from Lung King Street to the

breakwater east of the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter, including construction of vertical seawalls;

- (b) construction of roads, bridges, footbridges, subways, public transport interchanges, necessary transport facilities and associated services, stormwater culverts, drains and sewers;
- (c) construction of cooling water pumping systems for future developments and re-provisioning of the existing cooling water pumping systems;
- (d) construction of a marina;
- (e) re-provisioning of piers and public landing steps;
- (f) re-provisioning of the Government helipad and associated works;
- (g) hinterland drainage improvement works directly resulting from the reclamation;
- (h) re-provisioning of the existing cross-harbour water mains;
- (i) upgrading of the existing outfall of the Wan Chai East Sewage Screening Plant;
- (j) landscaping works at roadside amenity areas and reclaimed land; and
- (k) implementation of an environmental monitoring and audit (EM&A) programme for works mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (j) above.

JUSTIFICATION

5. We need to implement the proposed WDII to provide the necessary land for the construction of the following key transport infrastructure and facilities:

- (a) Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB);
- (b) Island Eastern Corridor Link (IECL);
- (c) North Hong Kong Island Line (NIL); and
- (d) the necessary ground level road connections.

6. The CWB and IECL will form a strategic Trunk Road linking the Rumsey Street Flyover with the Island Eastern Corridor, and will be a parallel and complementary route to relieve the traffic burden of the existing Connaught Road Central/Harcourt Road/Gloucester Road corridor on Hong Kong Island. At present, traffic congestion regularly occurs along these roads throughout the day, with the volume to capacity (v/c) ratio¹ at Gloucester Road /Harcourt Road at about 1.1. We predict that without the Trunk Road, the v/c ratio on the most critical section of Gloucester Road during the peak hours would exceed 1.4 in 2011. With the completion of the Trunk Road, the v/c ratio could be reduced to 0.9, and the traffic congestion could be relieved. To avoid future grid-lock, we need to construct the Trunk Road as soon as possible.

7. According to the findings of the Second Railway Development Study, the NIL is required to relieve the MTR Island Line (Causeway Bay section) and Tsuen Wan Line (Nathan Road section) by providing alternative direct link for travellers from North West New Territories and Tseung Kwan O areas to Hong Kong Island. It will be an extension of the existing MTR Tung Chung Line along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island to run through onto the eastern half of the existing MTR Island Line at the Fortress Hill Station.

8. Apart from the Trunk Road, ground level road connections are required to be constructed for linking the Trunk Road to the existing road network in Wan Chai and to the ground level roads from Central. The new roads will also cater for the direct traffic between the new reclamation areas in Central and Wan Chai, without having to route through the already very congested Harcourt Road/Gloucester Road corridor, or even the roads in the hinterland. These roads are also needed for access to the new waterfront on completion of the reclamation.

¹ The v/c ratio is a performance indicator for a road link. A v/c ratio equals to or less than 1.0 means that the road has sufficient capacity to cope with the volume of vehicular traffic under consideration and the resultant traffic will flow smoothly. A v/c ratio above 1.0 indicates the onset of mild congestion; above 1.2 indicates more serious congestion with traffic speeds progressively deteriorating with further increase in traffic.

9. Apart from providing land for the construction of transport infrastructure, the proposed development will also help improve the water quality of the harbour along the waterfront of Wan Chai, particularly that of the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter. We shall make use of the reclamation to eliminate the embayments of stagnant water and divert the drainage culverts which currently discharge into the Typhoon Shelter. We shall also make use of the new land formed along the waterfront to create a new waterfront promenade which will link up with the promenade running from Central, and provide relevant leisure facilities along the waterfront for enjoyment by the public. We shall improve access to the promenade by building footbridges/pedestrian walkways linking the hinterland and the waterfront.

10. To meet the target operation of the Trunk Road in 2011, we need to start the detailed design for WDII in April 2002 for completion in February 2004, and commence the reclamation works in March 2004.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. We estimate the cost of the site investigation and detailed design for the project to be \$ 111.1 million in MOD prices.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

12. We consulted the Town Planning Board on the current proposals on 24 August 2001. The Board agreed that the concerned district councils could be consulted on the proposals.

13. We consulted Eastern District Council on 6 September 2001. The members raised no objection to the proposals. We consulted the Wan Chai District Council on 18 September and 20 November 2001. While supporting the proposed reclamation and roadworks, the members showed concern over the reprovisioning of sports and recreation facilities affected by the proposed development. They asked the Government to consider incorporating the reprovisioned sports and recreation facilities within the CDA site to the north of Great Eagle Centre and Harbour Centre. We are considering the District Council's proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14. This project is a designated project under Schedule 3 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance (Cap. 499) and requires an EIA report to be approved under the EIA Ordinance. The proposed reclamation, roads, marina, cross-harbour water mains and sewage outfall are designated projects under the Schedule 2 of the EIA Ordinance for which environmental permits are required for construction.

15. The Director of Environmental Protection approved the EIA report for the project in August 2001 with two conditions. These two conditions are: (1) to make available to the public the environmental monitoring and audit data and reports on a designated website; and (2) to report back the results of the trial test for the proposal of using geosynthetic containers for confined disposal of contaminated mud from the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter. We shall comply with these conditions.

WAY FORWARD

16. Subject to Members' support, we plan to seek the Public Works Subcommittee's endorsement in December 2001 for funding to commence the detailed design and site investigation works.

Territory Development Department
November 2001