

For discussion
on 27 June 2005

Legislative Council Panel on Economic Services

Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park. The Ocean Park representatives will give a presentation at the panel meeting on the details of its Redevelopment Plans.

Background

2. In May 2002, the interdepartmental “Task Force on Redevelopment of Ocean Park and Tourist Attractions in Aberdeen” chaired by the Financial Secretary was set up to oversee the future development of Ocean Park and the development of Aberdeen tourism node.

3. A development group, led by the Chairman of Ocean Park Corporation, was subsequently set up under the Task Force in June 2003 to oversee the preparation of a detailed proposal relating to the future development and operation of Ocean Park. In February 2005, the development group submitted the Redevelopment Plans for the Ocean Park to the Task Force for consideration. The Ocean Park has also provided briefing materials on the Redevelopment Plans to Members of the Legislative Council for information in March 2005.

The Redevelopment Plans

4. Ocean Park indicates that given the opening of the Hong Kong Disneyland later this year and the opportunity to capitalize on the expected increase of tourists, it would be the appropriate time to consider the redevelopment of the 28-year old Ocean Park into a world-class marine themed attraction to complement Hong Kong Disneyland. According to Ocean Park’s Redevelopment Plans, “Ocean” and “Animal Encounter” will continue to be the key themes of the park. The new

Ocean Park will be divided into two major areas – The Waterfront, formerly the lowland and the Summit, formerly the Headland, featuring more than 70 distinctive attractions. The Park will have seven themed zones: Aqua City, Birds of Paradise, Whiskers Harbour, Marine World, the Rainforest, Thrill Mountain and Polar Adventure.

5. Under Ocean Park's Redevelopment Plans, works will be undertaken in phases with Phase 1 targeted for completion by the end of 2008 and Phase 2 in 2010. The phased redevelopment programme will allow the Park to be kept open during the construction period. With the redevelopment, it is expected that visitors will increase to over 5 million by 2010 and over 7 million by 2021. The redevelopment cost is estimated to be HK\$5.5 billion. Three hotels are proposed but according to Ocean Park's plans, the hotel development is a standalone and optional item, and has not been included in the estimated cost. A summary of the Redevelopment Plans, as provided by Ocean Park, is attached at Annex.

Way Forward

6. The Administration supports the general direction of the Redevelopment Plans. The Administration is now assessing the Redevelopment Plans carefully in respect of the financial, legal, institutional, planning, lands, transport as well as engineering and technical aspects. The current assessment has focused only on the park redevelopment, while the hotel development would be dealt with separately.

7. On the transport aspect, in particular, we note that Ocean Park has indicated that the Redevelopment Plans and the planned South Island Line (SIL) will supplement each other in that the new line will offer a convenient mass carrier direct from Central to the park, and the Ocean Park will in turn help passenger flows for the SIL. Separately, MTR Corporation submitted a revised proposal on the SIL to the Government in February 2005. The Environment Transport and Works Bureau is examining the economic and transport performance, financial implications, impact on other public transport modes, the changing community needs and changes in the relevant planning parameters such as the Ocean Park Redevelopment Plans, and will brief the Legislative Council on the way forward in due course.

8. We have consulted the Tourism Strategy Group which is supportive of the Redevelopment Plans. We will also consult the Southern District Council on the proposal.

9. Subject to the result of the assessment as set out in paragraph 6 above and views received, the Administration will consider whether and how to take forward Ocean Park's Redevelopment Plans. We will present the way forward and seek Legislative Council's views through this Panel in due course. If there are financial implications for the Government, we will consult this Council and seek its approval as appropriate.

Views Sought

10. Members are invited to note and comment on Ocean Park's Redevelopment Plans.

Economic Development and Labour Bureau
20 June 2005

IT'S TIME...

The New Ocean Park to be the World's Best Marine-Based Theme Park

The Waterfront, The Summit, Aqua City, Birds of Paradise, Whiskers Harbour, Marine World, The Rainforest, Thrill Mountain, Polar Adventure, Polar Bears, Penguins, Killer Whales. Sharks, Sea lions, Walruses, Manta Rays, Snow, Bobsled Roller Coasters, Aquariums, Under Water Restaurant, 3d/4d Simulator, Resort Hotels, Cable Car, High-speed train, Treehouse Village, Thrill Rides....

.....Twice as many attractions by 2010 !

On 18 March 2005, Ocean Park announced a redevelopment master plan⁽¹⁾ to redevelop the park into the world's best marine-based theme park, doubling the amount of attractions and firmly establishing itself as a world-class, must-see destination that will further strengthen Hong Kong as a premier tourist destination.

Ocean Park is a home grown and valuable asset of Hong Kong with a rich 28-year heritage of providing education, lessons in conservation and entertainment for a staggering 70 million visitors and is beloved by Hong Kong residents and international visitors alike.

The estimated HKD 5.55 billion⁽²⁾ redevelopment which is targeted to commence in 2006 and be completed in 2010 will transform the existing park into a spectacular, marine-based theme park with an amazing 33 new species of animals, connecting people with nature and offering a plethora of breathtaking attractions unparalleled anywhere else in the world. An expected above 5 million visitors per year by 2010 will be able to access the park via various transport options.

The new Ocean Park will be divided into two major areas - **The Waterfront**, formerly the Lowland and **The Summit**, formerly the Headland - featuring more than 70 distinctive attractions.

The Waterfront will be divided into three themed zones: **Aqua City**, which will house the spectacular new Ocean Park Grand Aquarium complex; **Birds of Paradise**, a lush tropical haven for a wide variety of avian wonders; and **Whiskers Harbour**, a playful port of call for families where Ocean Park's signature characters will welcome guests.

Towering 150 meters above sea level, The Summit will offer breathtaking views of Hong Kong's southern shores, Aberdeen and neighboring islands. Terraced levels sculptured into the hillside will showcase animals and entertainment from four different global climate zones: **Marine World**, **the Rainforest**, **Thrill Mountain** and **Polar Adventure**.

Not-to-be missed natural attractions within the new Ocean Park will include the **Killer Whale Stadium**, an enormous, seashell-shaped air conditioned building with 5000 seats

where visitors can view a dramatic **Killer Whale** show; the **Penguin Glacier** where penguins slip and slide to the delight of visitors; **Polar Bear Cove**, the home of enormous and adorable polar bears; **Swim with Dolphins** where visitors can don wetsuits and come nose-to-nose with the friendly mammals; and **Shark Encounter** in Aqua City where visitors can enter a protective cage to watch sharks being fed.

Visitors will be dazzled by 12 new animal and entertainment shows including the live-action **Typhoon Stunt Show** in the Rainforest area that combines the best of Hong Kong movie making, Wushu martial art stunt fighting and Hollywood special effects, and tremble at the exhilaration of **Everest**, the ultimate rollercoaster found at Thrill Mountain.

Ocean Park's signature mode of transport, the stunning cable car, will be rebuilt and visitors will also have the option of riding the **Summit Express**, a funicular train that will whisk visitors through a tunnel at high speed to The Summit, or back to The Waterfront in a matter of minutes.

The new Ocean Park will be developed in phases, allowing for the park to be kept open during the redevelopment period with animals and their habitats kept to a high standard and new entertainment and animal programs continually introduced.

The Ocean Park redevelopment master plan also includes a proposal for the development of three hotels to neighbour the park. The hotel development is not essential in driving the new Ocean Park, but will add additional appeal to the overall proposal and will be key to boosting the area as a premier tourist destination.

The new Ocean Park will not only provide nature, conservation and education, but it will also be a catalyst for the development of the Aberdeen Tourism Project, kick starting an exciting revival of the south side of the island.

Ocean Park is a not-for-profit organization, 100 percent wholly owned by the Hong Kong SAR Government and is expected to remain so under the new proposal. The Ocean Park redevelopment should not require any Government subsidies or grants but is expected to be funded by a combination of government and commercial loans.

Note:

- (1) The redevelopment master plan is a conceptual plan only and includes details and specifics known at this time. The details and specifics may contain estimates and may be subject to change.
- (2) The estimated costs are based on a costing exercise undertaken by Ocean Park's consultants following appropriate consultations with Ocean Park.

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