

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)62/06-07
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/PLW/1

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 25 July 2006 at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, SBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP

Members attending : Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH

Members absent : Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon WONG Yung-kan, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

Public officers attending : Agenda item III

Mr IP Man-fai, Robin
Deputy Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Planning and Lands) 1

Mr TSOI Kin-pan, George
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Transport) (Acting)

Ms LI Chi-miu, Phyllis
Chief Town Planner/Special Duties (1)
Planning Department

Mr LAM Sing-kwok
Chief Engineer/Hong Kong (2)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr KWAN Chi-wai, Lawrence
Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong
Transport Department

Agenda item IV

Miss WONG Wing-chen, Janet
Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and
Works (Works) 1

Mr WONG Ming-to
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works) 2

Mr KWONG Hing-ip, Patrick
Assistant Director of Civil Engineering and Development
(Administration)

Ms NG Tze-kwun, Kathy
Senior Landscape Architect
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

Staff in attendance : Mr WONG Siu-yee
Senior Council Secretary (1)7

Ms Christina SHIU
Legislative Assistant (1)7

Action

I Confirmation of minutes and matters arising

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)2023/05-06 -- Minutes of special meeting on
11 May 2006
LC Paper No. CB(1)2024/05-06 -- Minutes of meeting on
23 May 2006)

The minutes of the meetings held on 11 and 23 May 2006 were confirmed respectively.

2. In relation to Kai Tak Planning Review, the Deputy Chairman consulted members' on the suggestion made by Miss CHAN Yuen-han at the meeting on 27 June 2006 of holding a meeting to invite deputations to present views on the Preliminary Outline Development Plan of Kai Tak. He also informed members that the Administration had arranged four public forums and district forums on the subject to be held in July and August 2006, and the Administration had undertaken to report the consultation results to the Panel in around October 2006. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern about the possible lack of a quorum if a meeting for the purpose was held during the summer recess, and suggested that a meeting could be held in the next legislative session. Members agreed that the Panel would discuss the subject in around October 2006.

II Information papers issued since last meeting

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)1948/05-06(01) -- Issues raised by Wan Chai District Council members at the meeting with Legislative Council Members on 30 March 2006 on "Urban renewal"
LC Paper No. CB(1)1983/05-06(01) -- Submission dated 5 July 2006 from Designing Hong Kong to the Chairman of the Town Planning Board on "Comprehensive review of the planning for the Central waterfront"

- LC Paper No. CB(1)2013/05-06(01) -- Information paper on “Work of the Urban Renewal Authority” provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2019/05-06(01) -- Information paper on “182WC – Replacement and rehabilitation of water mains, stage 2” provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2020/05-06(01) -- Information paper on “112CD – Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories – package A” provided by the Administration
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2025/05-06(01) -- Reply from the Secretary, Town Planning Board to the submission dated 5 July 2006 from Designing Hong Kong on “Comprehensive review of the planning for the Central waterfront”
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2028/05-06(01) -- Information paper on “Revision of fee for cancellation of re-entry charged by Lands Department” provided by the Administration)

3. Members noted the information papers issued since last meeting.

4. In relation to the information paper on “112CD – Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories – package A” (LC Paper No. CB(1)2020/05-06(01)), Mr LI Kwok-ying noted that 12 objections received under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance for the proposed drainage works had not yet been resolved. He said that he was in support of the proposed drainage works and was concerned that if the objections remained unresolved, the proposed drainage works would be held up. He therefore would like to know more details about the unresolved objections, how the Administration would handle these objections and whether the programme of the drainage works would be affected by the objections. The Deputy Chairman instructed the Clerk to request the Administration to provide the information requested by Mr LI.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information note provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)2132/05-06(01)) was issued to members on 16 August 2006.)

III Enhancement of continuity of the pedestrian links along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island and the accessibility and environment of the harbourfront of the Hong Kong Island for public use

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2022/05-06(01) -- Information paper provided by the Administration)

5. Members noted that a submission dated 25 July 2006 from Designing Hong Kong Harbour District was tabled at the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The submission (LC Paper No. CB(1)2060/05-06(01)) was subsequently issued to members on 26 July 2006.)

Briefing by the Administration

6. The Deputy Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) 1 (DS/P&L1) said that the Administration had prepared a paper in response to members' requests made at the meeting on 9 June 2006. The paper introduced the existing pedestrian networks along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island and the constraints in developing a continuous waterfront promenade and enhancing the waterfront due to the presence of public facilities requiring marine access and private developments up to the waterfront. The Administration nevertheless had long-term planning for enhancing the waterfront and pedestrian linkage along the northern shore and enhancement measures would be implemented whenever such opportunities arose. The paper contained detailed information on planned facilities, studies and possible measures.

7. The Chief Town Planner/Special Duties (1) of the Planning Department (Ch Town Planner/PlanD) gave a PowerPoint presentation to brief members on the details of the Administration's enhancement measures and plans in relation to waterfront connectivity and pedestrian access along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island.

(Post-meeting note: The presentation notes (LC Paper No. CB(1)2060/05-06(02)) tabled at the meeting were subsequently issued to members on 26 July 2006.)

Discussion

Continuity of pedestrian links

8. Mr LEE Wing-tat was dissatisfied with the slow progress in enhancing pedestrian access along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island and pointed out that the pedestrian networks were not well connected. He considered that there were at least two missing links, one from Central and Admiralty to Wan Chai and the other from Wan Chai and Causeway Bay to Victoria Park. Providing the two

missing links would enable pedestrians to walk from Shun Tak Centre to Victoria Park. He asked whether the Administration had any plan to construct the two missing pedestrian links.

9. In response, DS/P&L1 said that the Administration was exploring the feasibility of constructing an east-west footbridge on Gloucester Road and Harcourt Road to connect the group of Government offices and footbridges in Wan Chai with the future Central Government Complex. The proposed footbridge would connect Central and Admiralty with Wan Chai. The Administration was also considering a comprehensive walkway system linking up the Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park with Central through the provision of an elevated pedestrian walkway between Shun Tak Centre and the existing Wilmer Street footbridge. As for the connection from Wan Chai and Causeway Bay to Victoria Park, he pointed out that pedestrians would be able to walk from Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre to Victoria Park through the new waterfront to be developed under Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII).

10. Mr LEE Wing-tat commented that the proposed arrangement for connecting Central and Admiralty with Wan Chai was not desirable because the Central Government Complex was yet to be completed. At present, there was no dedicated elevated walkway along the Admiralty waterfront for connecting Central and Admiralty with Wan Chai. The proposed arrangement of using the passageway near Kellett Island for connecting Wan Chai and Causeway Bay with Victoria Park was also undesirable for safety reasons because the area was unfrequented, especially at night.

11. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport) (Acting) (Atg PAS/T) said that while there was no dedicated elevated walkway along the Admiralty waterfront for connecting Central and Admiralty with Wan Chai, pedestrians could walk through the shopping arcades in Admiralty and then continue onto CITIC Tower through an elevated pedestrian walkway. For the proposed footbridge connecting the group of Government offices and footbridges in Wan Chai with the future Central Government Complex, the Administration was studying the associated land use and planning issues; and the feasibility of implementing the project. As the project would involve the developed areas in Wan Chai, the Administration could not provide a concrete implementation timeframe. In relation to the elevated pedestrian walkway between Shun Tak Centre and the existing Wilmer Street footbridge, the Administration targeted at completing it in a similar timeframe as that for Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Phase II, which was around 2011.

12. Noting this, Mr LEE Wing-tat said that there should be dedicated elevated walkways along the waterfront so that the public could enjoy the sea view and walk comfortably from Central to Wan Chai, instead of having to walk through shopping arcades. He reiterated that the connection along the waterfront from Wan Chai and Causeway Bay to Victoria Park should be enhanced by constructing footbridges.

13. DS/P&L1 said that as explained in paragraph 3 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)2022/05-06(01)), making use of the podium level and the internal circulation spaces of commercial buildings was an important feature of the pedestrian access network. Some examples included the system linking up Exchange Square, International Finance Centre I & II, the Airport Railway Hong Kong Station and the ferry piers in Central/Sheung Wan. As for the connection from Wan Chai and Causeway Bay to Victoria Park, he pointed out that the new waterfront would be used to provide easy pedestrian access. Ch Town Planner/PlanD added that although reclamation near Kellett Island should be avoided as far as possible under the principle of protecting the harbour, the Administration would continue to explore the feasibility of providing a more direct pedestrian access and widening the pedestrian link between Kellett Island and Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CBTS).

Admin

14. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed concern on the status of the proposed footbridge linking Aon China Building and Entertainment Building in Central and considered that the Administration should require the developer concerned to fulfill its obligation by constructing the footbridge. In response, DS/P&L1 said that he did not have on hand information relating to the status of the proposed footbridge at Aon China Building. He undertook to provide the information after the meeting.

Admin

15. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the Administration should have an implementation timetable and a mechanism to coordinate enhancement measures for pedestrian access to the waterfront and other pedestrian links so that the relevant planning and implementation work could be better coordinated. He pointed out that footbridge projects might affect the interests of different stakeholders such as the owners of commercial buildings and owners of at-grade shops. The Administration should have the determination to carry out those projects that had been planned to meet public needs and should not hold up projects on account of individual dissenting views. While welcoming a holistic planning of the waterfront, he considered that there should be an objective indicator to illustrate the ease of accessibility. In this regard, he requested the Administration to provide information on the distance and the time needed to walk to the waterfront from the exits of the Mass Transit Railway stations from Sheung Wan to North Point.

16. In response, DS/P&L1 pointed out that while the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau was responsible for the policy matters relating to footbridges and the Highways Department was responsible for managing most of the footbridges, a mechanism to coordinate matters relating to footbridge projects was in place within the Administration. Atg PAS/T undertook to provide the information requested by Mr Albert CHAN.

17. Ir Dr Raymond HO shared the view that enhancement measures for waterfront connectivity and pedestrian access should be expedited. The

Administration should be proactive in implementing the enhancement measures. Although some enhancement measures were not major projects, they should still be accorded priority because they were conducive to improving the public's quality of life. He commented that as the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau were the two major bureaux responsible for planning and implementing the enhancement measures, a deputy secretary from the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau should attend the meeting when the subject was discussed next time.

18. In response, DS/P&L1 said that the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau had a close working relationship and assured members that the two bureaux had effective communication and good cooperation in implementing enhancement measures for waterfront connectivity and pedestrian access.

Waterfront enhancement

19. Mr WONG Kwok-hing welcomed the idea of bringing the harbour to the people. He however commented that because the Administration lacked foresight in developing the waterfront, the continuity of the waterfront was interrupted by private developments or public facilities like pumping stations. He enquired whether it would be possible to better utilize the space under the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) by connecting the bridge piers of IEC or constructing boardwalks so that the public could enjoy the waterfront. He also expressed concern on how the Administration would handle constraints on waterfront enhancement imposed by existing private developments.

20. In reply, DS/P&L1 said that the Administration would seize every opportunity to enhance the waterfront for public enjoyment and there were on-going, short-term and long-term enhancement measures. The Administration was also aware of the importance of waterfront connectivity. There were existing and planned pedestrian networks to facilitate public access to the waterfront. In North Point, the Administration would also identify opportunities for providing more open space. Ch Town Planner/PlanD added that there were sites in North Point, including the Oil Street and ex-North Point Estate sites the future development of which would provide opportunities for enhancement of pedestrian access to the waterfront. The Administration was conducting a review on the planning brief for the Oil Street site in relation to land use and the scale of development, and the opportunity would be taken to enhance the provision of pedestrian facilities to the waterfront. For the ex-North Point Estate site, a review was also being conducted including the enhancement of the accessibility to the waterfront. The idea of constructing boardwalks under IEC in North Point might involve technical feasibility and harbour reclamation issues and would need detailed consideration.

21. Dr KWOK Ka-ki was dissatisfied with the Administration's progress in implementing waterfront enhancement measures and pointed out that the

ex-incinerator and ex-abattoir in Kennedy Town had been left idle for a long time. The sites for Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Phase II and the ex-Gala Point had also been left vacant. Other waterfront Government sites in North Point were also not enhanced for public enjoyment. Neither did he see beautification and greening works being carried out in the area near the Central piers. He was unconvinced that private developments were the main constraints in waterfront enhancement and considered that the Administration itself should be held responsible for the procrastination in putting waterfront sites to better uses for the public. As many waterfront sites requiring enhancement were Government land, the implementation of enhancement measures could have been faster. Apart from drawing up long-term enhancement plans, short-term measures should not be neglected. He enquired about the timeframe for the implementation of the waterfront enhancement measures.

22. In response, DS/P&L1 said that the Planning Department (PlanD) was conducting a land use review for the long-term planning of Kennedy Town and Mount Davis, including the sites of the ex-incinerator and ex-abattoir. The Administration would submit the report to the Town Planning Board for consideration, after which the relevant District Councils and the public would be consulted on possible enhancement measures. In North Point, waterfront enhancement measures from Wan Chai to North Point were being considered taking advantage of the land to be reclaimed for the construction of the proposed Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB). There would be further consultation on the matter. Construction works for Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Phase II would commence in 2008 for completion in 2011. The temporary open space at the ex-Gala Point would be constructed together with the pumping station of the Drainage Services Department for completion in 2009. PlanD would commission a study to refine the urban design framework of the Central waterfront running from Four Seasons Hotel through the Central piers to CITIC Tower, and the study would identify improvements to the quality of the waterfront open space, including greening and pedestrian linkages within the study area. As a temporary short-term measure, the waterfront area in the ex-public cargo working area along Hung Hing Road would be opened up for public enjoyment. There would be amenity areas and a 600-metre long pedestrian link connecting Golden Bauhinia Square and CBTS and the works would be completed in early 2007.

23. Ms Emily LAU considered that the Administration should set up indicators and pledges for implementing the enhancement measures and report to the Panel on the progress of the measures on a half-yearly basis. She enquired about the role of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) in relation to the Administration's proposed long-term and short-term enhancement measures. She also enquired about the background to short-term temporary enhancement measures and opined that there should be features such as artistic ornaments and facilities for staging cultural activities to attract people to use the short-term enhancement facilities. Although of a short-term nature, the quality of the facilities should be of an acceptable standard.

24. In reply, DS/P&L1 said that the Administration would provide information papers or attend meetings to discuss the subject as deemed appropriate by the Panel. HEC and its subcommittees had been playing an active role in harbourfront enhancement matters and provided valuable advice to the Administration in this regard. The work of HEC consisted of several areas and it had done a lot of work in relation to long-term planning, such as the planning for WDII. At the same time, HEC considered that pending implementation of long-term projects at some waterfront areas, short-term measures which could be implemented in one to two years should also be carried out so that the public could enjoy the waterfront areas. For example, the waterfront from Golden Bauhinia Square to CBTS would be connected by a waterfront promenade at the ex-public cargo working area along Hung Hing Road, which would be opened up for public enjoyment by early next year. Moreover, the waterfront promenade in West Kowloon Reclamation was one of the enhancement measures completed based on the recommendation of HEC.

25. Ir Dr Raymond HO enquired about the feasibility of building public facilities such as pumping stations underground or providing greening measures on top of the structures. In reply, DS/HPL(P&L)1 said that the Administration would endeavour to reduce the visual impact of public facilities which had to be located at the waterfront by adopting an appropriate design when they were being constructed.

Reclamation issues

26. In view of the need to satisfy the “overriding public needs test” in carrying out any harbour reclamation works, Mr WONG Kwok-hing was concerned about the extent of reclamation required for providing a connected waterfront and how the Administration could achieve that goal in locations where no reclamation had been proposed. He also enquired about the reason for carrying out reclamation in North Point and the planned uses and building structures on the reclaimed land.

27. In response, DS/HPL(P&L)1 said that the Administration acknowledged the need to satisfy the “overriding public needs test” in carrying out any harbour reclamation works. The proposed waterfront enhancement works involved two reclamation projects. A major part of the land to be reclaimed under Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) would be used for creating a new waterfront with a long waterfront promenade for public enjoyment. Under WDII, the construction of the proposed CWB would require reclamation. The Administration had taken the opportunity to identify possible locations along the shore between Wan Chai and North Point where waterfront enhancement measures could be carried out. As regards the reason for carrying out reclamation in North Point and the planned uses and building structures on the reclaimed land, Ch Town Planner/PlanD explained that reclamation in North Point was required to accommodate the CWB and portal area, and part of the reclaimed land would house the administration building and ventilation building of CWB. Under Tunnel Option Variation 1, CWB would be built in the form of a tunnel and the administration building and ventilation

building were necessary facilities for the tunnel. The bulk of the reclaimed land would be dedicated for waterfront enhancement such as waterfront park use. The Administration was preparing a Concept Plan to show the locations of various uses and facilities.

28. Noting this, Mr WONG Kwok-hing was concerned that the reclaimed land would be used not merely for construction of CWB and the necessary slip roads and implementing waterfront enhancement measures. He stated his objection to the construction of the at-grade administration building on reclaimed land and suggested building it underground. He further stated that many North Point residents objected to the proposed reclamation in North Point.

29. In response, DS/P&L1 said that under WDII, there would be opportunities for waterfront enhancement and more details would be available later for public consultation on the enhancement measures. The Administration would present the details of WDII again in the future. He reiterated that certain facilities would be necessary as the CWB tunnel rose to its portal.

30. Dr KWOK Ka-ki considered that the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands should have attended the meeting and that he should attend the meeting when the subject was discussed next time. The argument that reclamation was needed under WDII for solving traffic problems and enhancing the waterfront and pedestrian access was unfounded and misleading. He did not think that the reclamation works in CRIII and WDII had been agreed on by the public and commented that enhancement measures along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island should be implemented first before proceeding with the reclamation works.

31. In response, DS/P&L1 said that as his scope of work included land use planning and enhancement of the waterfront and pedestrian access, it was appropriate for him to attend the present meeting and future meetings to provide information and explanations. He clarified that the Administration would plan and implement enhancement measures at the earliest opportunity, such as works relating to Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Phase II and the temporary open space at the ex-Gala Point. While many enhancement measures requiring no reclamation were already in progress, some enhancement measures in Central and Wan Chai could only be implemented upon completion of the relevant reclamation works and they were still subject to detailed planning and design.

Admin

32. Summing up, the Deputy Chairman said that the Administration should set a target on the implementation of waterfront and pedestrian access enhancement measures. He requested the Administration to provide the expected completion dates of the proposed waterfront enhancement works and expedite the works for those requiring no reclamation. In addition, the Administration should separately provide the expected completion dates of the proposed pedestrian links, such as footbridges and elevated walkways. He also asked the Administration to provide the information requested by Mr WONG Kwok-hing on the feasibility of introducing measures to better utilize the space under IEC in North Point, such as constructing boardwalks.

IV Greening master plans for Kowloon West and Hong Kong Island – development of greening master plans for Mong Kok/Yau Ma Tei and Sheung Wan/Wan Chai/Causeway Bay

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2022/05-06(02) -- Information paper on “Development and implementation of Greening Master Plans – Progress Report” provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(1)2022/05-06(03) -- Background brief on “Greening Master Plans” prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

33. Members noted a submission dated 24 July 2006 from Hon CHOY So-yuk tabled at the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The submission (LC Paper No. CB(1)2060/05-06(03)) was subsequently issued to members on 26 July 2006.)

Briefing by the Administration

34. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) 1 (DS/W1) gave a PowerPoint presentation to brief members on the progress of the development and implementation of Greening Master Plans (GMPs), including the progress of greening works in Tsim Sha Tsui and Central, the revised consultation mechanism for development of GMPs, the phased approach in development of GMPs and the funding proposal for development of GMPs for Mong Kok/Yau Ma Tei in Kowloon West and Sheung Wan/Wan Chai/Causeway Bay on Hong Kong Island.

(*Post-meeting note:* The presentation notes (LC Paper No. CB(1)2060/05-06(04)) tabled at the meeting were subsequently issued to members on 26 July 2006.)

Discussion

Suggestions on greening measures

35. Mr LEE Wing-tat commented that apart from major roads in Kowloon West where there was sufficient space for planting trees, the Administration should also implement greening measures as far as possible on side streets where there was insufficient space for planting trees and the level of greening was low. Acknowledging that planting trees might be difficult under certain circumstances, he suggested that alternative greening measures such as planting climbers or using railing planters could be considered. He also suggested that consideration be given to labeling the trees and plants and setting up tree trails for educational purposes.

36. In response, DS/W1 said that the Administration would not focus on major roads only, maximizing the number of beneficiaries was also one of the objectives of implementing GMPs. She would relay Mr LEE Wing-tat's views to the responsible consultants and landscape architects. Side streets recommended by the relevant District Councils for greening would be considered subject to technical feasibility. If the relevant District Councils considered that tree trails could be set up in certain locations and the plants should be labeled, the Administration could do so accordingly. The Senior Landscape Architect of the Civil Engineering and Development Department added that at some trial locations in Tsim Sha Tsui, climbers were planted on railings. These measures would be extended to other areas if the experience proved successful.

37. Drawing reference from overseas experience, Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether it was possible to plant grass along the tram rails. He also asked whether the Administration had any policy regarding greening requirements for undeveloped sites and sites where planned construction works had not yet commenced, and enquired about the feasibility of planting grass on unsold Government sites and undeveloped private land. He further enquired about the Administration's policy in relation to implementing greening measures on rooftops and podiums.

38. In response, the Assistant Director of Civil Engineering and Development (Administration) (AD/CEDD) said that the feasibility of planting grass along the tram rails had previous been explored but the Hong Kong Tramways Limited had reservations on the proposal because of safety reasons. The Administration would continue to discuss with the company on the issue and carry out greening in areas near the tram rails in the meantime. As regards implementing greening measures on undeveloped Government sites, the Administration already had relevant greening plans and would follow up the matter. In relation to greening on rooftop

and podiums, the responsible consultants would be requested to explore such opportunities, including vertical greening. The Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) 2 (PAS/W2) added that according to the annual programme of the Steering Committee on Greening, the Administration would implement temporary greening measures on Government sites if those sites would remain undeveloped for some time and no temporary uses were planned for those sites. As for rooftop and podium greening, he pointed out the Architectural Services Department had included greening measures in designing rooftops and podiums of Government buildings since 2001. Greening measures in some 30 Government buildings had been completed. Greening measures would also be implemented in 30-odd Government buildings currently under construction or planning.

39. In reply to a further enquiry from Mr WONG Kwok-hing, DS/W1 said the Administration was implementing greening measures through administrative procedures at present because introducing legislation for compulsory greening was a complicated issue and the community might not have a unanimous view on the issue.

Implementation plan

Admin 40. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming expressed appreciation for the comprehensiveness of the information provided in the Administration's paper. As regards the implementation plan, he requested the Administration to provide an overall timetable for implementing GMPs in various areas, including those currently under planning and those under consideration, for example, built-up areas in the New Territories such as Yuen Long and Tsuen Wan. In response, DS/W1 said that there had been discussion with the Home Affairs Department and it was agreed that for built-up areas in the New Territories, greening measures would be implemented in some key areas without awaiting the development of GMPs for those areas so as to expedite greening.

41. Ir Dr Raymond HO shared the view that the current proposal was more detailed and expressed support for the proposal. The Administration could first present the general principles covering a large area and then provide the details on one to two areas for further discussion each time. He pointed out that greening works were labour-intensive and could provide business opportunities for small and medium enterprises and create employment opportunities. Although greening proposals might not involve major works projects, the environment and quality of life of the public would be enhanced and the Legislative Council would be supportive of funding greening initiatives. He expressed concern on the complicated and time-consuming processes involved in planting trees and urged the Administration to overcome constraints, such as underground utilities, and expedite the implementation of greening measures. He also urged the Administration to enhance landscape works and explore innovative greening measures by drawing reference from the greening measures in other places.

42. In response, DS/W1 assured members that the Administration would adopt a proactive and innovative approach in implementing greening measures. PAS/W2 added that where the circumstances allowed, consideration would be given to relocating existing underground utilities to create more space for planting trees.

43. Dr KWOK Ka-ki supported the proposal and shared the view that greening measures should be expedited. He enquired whether the Administration would partner up with other organizations in speeding up the implementation of greening measures, especially in areas where funds had not yet been allocated. He also enquired about the timeframe for implementing GMPs in urban areas in the next phase.

44. In reply, DS/W1 said that there was community participation in implementing greening measures. For instance, the Administration had successfully persuaded developers to carry out greening measures with satisfactory results in Central and Causeway Bay, and the Urban Renewal Authority had cooperated with the Administration in implementing greening measures near Western Market. The Administration would continue its efforts in this regard. As regards the next phase of the project, areas such as Hong Kong East, Shum Shui Po, Hung Hom and Kowloon East would be included. According to the current schedule, implementation of GMPs in the majority of urban areas would be completed in about four years.

45. Ms Emily LAU supported the proposal and shared the view that there should be short-term greening measures on undeveloped sites. While agreeing that the number of beneficiaries should be maximized in implementing greening measures, she considered that less well-off areas with poor environmental conditions should not be neglected. She supported early consultation with District Councils and hoped that consensus would be reached on greening measures. She enquired about the timeframe for implementing greening measures in built-up areas in the New Territories. While concurring that expediting greening works would provide more employment opportunities, she emphasized the importance of good coordination in carrying out excavation works so as to minimize disturbance to the public.

46. In response, DS/W1 said that greening measures in key locations in built-up areas in the New Territories, such as Yuen Long town centre and Tsuen Wan town centre, would be implemented as soon as possible. Whether greening measures could be further expedited would depend on market situation and the availability of landscape architects, as the supply of professionals in this field was rather limited in Hong Kong. Implementing GMPs in phases would address these constraints and facilitate small enterprises in participating in the greening works. In relation to excavation works, PAS/W2 assured members that the Administration would ensure that necessary excavation works would be well coordinated so as to minimize disturbance.

Choice of plant species

47. Regarding the choice of plant species, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming commented that Candlenut Tree might not be suitable for densely populated areas because it had nuts with hard shells which when fallen would cause inconvenience to passers-by. Ir Dr Raymond HO also pointed out that Candlenut Tree might not be suitable in urban areas with narrow pavements because it was a fast-growing species with a thick trunk and its roots might cause bulging of pavements. In addition, climbers might easily wither if they were planted at roadside locations.

48. In response, DS/W1 said that there were many considerations in choosing appropriate plant species and members' concerns on planting Candlenut Tree in densely populated areas and urban areas had already been taken note of. Early public participation under the revised consultation mechanism would be conducive to identifying other similar concerns prior to developing the GMPs.

Project cost

49. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming enquired about the items included in the estimated project cost of \$18.1 million. Dr KWOK Ka-ki commented that the majority of the project cost should be spent on purchasing plants and consultancy fees should be kept to a minimum.

50. AD/CEDD said that the estimated project cost covered the development of GMPs for the areas concerned, drawing up of detailed designs of short-term greening measures and site investigation works. By leveraging on local stakeholders' knowledge and valuable suggestions on site constraints, the Administration was able to reduce the estimated consultants' fees for development of GMPs by 25% when compared to the corresponding portion in the submission to the Public Works Subcommittee on 21 December 2005.

V Any other business

51. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:35 pm.