

Supplementary information on issues raised in the letters of 26 October and 3 November 2005 from the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

The Administration's assessment on the viability and desirability of alternative uses of the Tamar site

The Tamar site was first zoned "Commercial" use on the draft Central District Outline Zoning Plan (OZP). In January 1998, the site was tentatively earmarked for the development of a new Central Government Complex (CGC). After a thorough process of public consultation and objections under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance, the site was formally rezoned for "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") and "Open Space" uses (for the development of CGC and a civic place respectively) on the draft Central District (Extension) OZP. The Tamar site was not the subject of any objection. The OZP was then approved by the Chief Executive in Council in February 2000. The GIC and the civic place sites are about 2.2 ha and 2 ha respectively. The Government's proposed development at the Tamar site is in line with the planning intentions under the OZP.

2. There are suggestions that the Tamar site should be rezoned for either commercial use or recreational use.

Commercial use

Some quarter of the realty industry suggested that the Tamar site should be sold for construction of commercial buildings. However, we consider that the site is more suitable for GIC use than for commercial development. The proposal of developing a civic core at the Tamar site has previously gone through extensive public consultation and statutory planning process. It is clearly stated in the explanatory statement of the approved OZP that the Tamar site is reserved for the development of CGC and LegCo Complex and the use has been generally accepted by the community. In the longer term, to meet the demand for commercial uses, other commercial sites will be available in the Central District. It is not necessary to make use of this prime civic core for commercial development.

Recreational and leisure use

It is proposed by some members of the public that the whole Tamar site should be developed for recreational use. However, our planning concept is to develop the Tamar site as a prime civic core of Hong Kong. The existing OZP was approved by the Executive Council after thorough public consultation. With the designation

of the Tamar site partly for the GIC use and partly for the civic place use, we consider that the proposed development of the new CGC, LegCo complex, civic place and other related facilities at Tamar would be an optimal use of this valuable piece of land at waterfront. The Civic Place, in particular, will be a recreational open space for leisure and enjoyment of the public. It will also be well connected to the future Waterfront Promenade, forming part of the integrated open space network in the new central waterfront. The design of the Tamar development as a whole will be in harmony with its surrounding settings of a prime civic core and the harbourfront, whilst the disposition and height of buildings will protect the Victoria Peak ridgeline.

Implications of future development on the Tamar site on the infrastructure planning for the Central district

3. The Government has conducted a detailed traffic impact study in 2002. The findings revealed that upon the completion of the Tamar development project, the roads surrounding the Tamar site should be able to absorb the additional traffic generated. During the construction stage, various mitigating measures will be taken to minimise inconvenience to road users.

4. The planned transport network in the Central district has already taken into account the estimated traffic from the proposed development in the area as shown on the relevant OZP.

Detailed breakdowns of the provisions of offices/facilities of the new Central Government Complex and intended use of the existing Central Government Offices

5. The Administration will update the user requirements for the new CGC in the coming months. We will brief the Panel on the provisions of office accommodation and facilities to be provided in the future CGC in early 2006, before our submission to the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for funding approval. As regards the existing Central Government Offices and Murray Building, it is premature to discuss the future use of the sites at this stage. The Tamar development project will not be completed until 2010. The sites of the Central Government Offices and Murray Building will not be available until sometime after the completion of the Tamar development project.