

Information Paper

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**GREENING MASTER PLANS
FOR AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to inform Members on the plan of the Administration to develop and implement greening master plans (GMPs) for areas in the New Territories (NT).

BACKGROUND

2. A GMP seeks to define comprehensively the greening framework of an area by studying into its characteristics and particular needs as well as providing a guide to the planning, design and implementation of works so as to achieve comprehensive, consistent and sustainable greening results.

3. The Administration embarked on the development of GMPs in September 2004 and selected the two areas of Tsim Sha Tsui and Central as a pilot scheme to try out the new greening initiative. Upon the successful development of the above two GMPs in mid-2005, we decided to extend the scope of the scheme to cover other urban areas in Hong Kong and to roll out the development of the GMPs in stages. With the support of this Panel and the funding approval of the FC, we started the development of GMPs for another five areas, viz. Mong Kok, Yau Ma Tei, Sheung Wan, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay in January 2007.

4. We consulted this Panel on 27 March 2007 to seek Members' view on our proposal to develop GMPs for all remaining urban areas in Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island. While the proposal was generally supported, some Members requested us to review the timetable for the development and implementation of GMPs for the NT.

GMP FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES

5. Regarding GMPs for the NT districts, we are aware of the aspiration of the general public. Greening provisions in large areas in the NT are better than the urban areas due to the well-planned new town developments. For instance, more advanced and comprehensive planning standards have been adopted in Sha Tin and Tai Po. In addition, Landscape Master Plans were prepared for some new towns to facilitate provision of greening facilities. More open spaces are reserved for greening and landscaping purposes.

6. As a result, greened space in the NT districts, both by way of natural greenery of virgin landscape in rural/under-developed areas or cultivated greenery of planned provisions in new towns, is generally more abundant than urban areas in Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island. Our preliminary investigation indicates that the existing green coverage ratio of NT is about 74% (i.e. green coverage area/total area of NT districts) while that of the urban districts is about 46% only.

7. Despite the existing greening conditions of NT districts, we consider that the development of these GMPs should be carried out as soon as practicable, taking account of resources and the development programmes committed for the urban areas. We shall start drawing up a programme for the GMPs for NT districts after we have seen the response to our proposed tender for the GMPs for the urban areas. We will by then be able to determine whether the market have sufficient resources to cope with the substantial undertaking and will prepare a practical timetable for rolling out the GMPs for the NT districts.

8. As the total area of NT districts is over 97,000 hectare, which is seven times more than urban areas, we intend to focus on those areas of NT with higher population density for resources and cost effectiveness considerations. For built-up areas in NT, greening measures would be implemented in some focal areas without awaiting the development of GMPs for these areas so as to expedite greening. We have already identified focal points for some NT districts in consultation with relevant District Officers of the Home Affairs Department. Design of the proposed greening measures for these areas including Sha Tin, Tai Po, North District, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan and Tung Chung are underway.

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