

**Subcommittee on Country Parks (Designation)
(Consolidation) (Amendment) Order 2010**

Responses to submission from Le Prestige Guest Services Centre, LOHAS Park

This paper sets out our responses to the submission from Le Prestige Guest Services Centre, LOHAS Park:

Justification for extension of South East New Territories Landfill

2. Hong Kong has an imminent waste problem. To address the serious problem of managing waste in Hong Kong, the Administration has published a Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014) (the Policy Framework) in December 2005, which sets out a comprehensive waste management strategy for the next ten years. The Policy Framework encompasses initiatives on waste avoidance and reduction at source, waste recovery and recycling and bulk reduction of waste. It also proposes to develop new Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF), by using advanced thermal and incineration technologies, to effectively reduce the volume of waste requiring disposal. Reduction of waste generation and waste recycling has been and will always be our primary objectives and accorded top priority. However, even with all the waste reduction and recycling initiatives as well as the development of the IWMF as a priority project for commissioning by mid 2010s, the three landfills would be full or nearly full by that time.

3. The public generally have a misconception that Hong Kong needs only either landfills or waste incineration/IWMF to handle our waste. It should be noted that developed countries and cities including those which already have modern waste to energy incinerators still need landfills as the final repositories for non-combustible waste as well as waste residues after incineration or other treatment. In terms of provision of landfill capacity to meet the demand, the South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill extension could provide 17 million cubic metres for extending the life of the landfill by approximately six years to tie in with the commissioning of succession waste management facilities for handling construction waste and municipal solid waste in the southeast region of the territory. Hence, to address our imminent problem in waste treatment and disposal and to ensure sufficient landfill capacity for future need, it is essential to extend the existing landfills to serve as the final repositories for residual waste and waste that cannot be further treated or recycled. Waste reduction and recycling, IWMF, landfill extension and other waste management facilities are all essential integral components of Hong Kong's overall waste management strategy.

4. The estimation of territory-wide demand of around 200 million tonnes of landfill space required from 2006 to 2025, which was made before the mid-2000s when waste reduction measures were not fully in place, is now outdated. With the Policy Framework promulgated in 2005, the construction waste disposal charging scheme implemented in 2006 and change in the overall economic climate, the annual waste disposal quantity has been gradually declining since mid-2000s.

5. Despite that the waste disposal quantity has been decreasing in recent years, the trend is unlikely to last indefinitely. For instance, the quantity of construction waste disposal has levelled off at 3,000 tonnes per day since 2008 but it will likely rebound due to the increase of infrastructural works in the coming years. The continuous expansion of the source separation of municipal solid waste and the introduction of the voluntary producer responsibility schemes help improve the waste recovery in Hong Kong. In 2009, the domestic waste recovery rate was 35% which has more than doubled the figure of 14% in 2004. As for commercial and industrial waste, the recovery rate has been maintained at a relatively high level of some 60% over the years. Overall, we achieved a municipal solid waste (MSW) recovery rate of 49% in 2009. While the Administration will continue implementing the source separation initiative, it is anticipated that further substantial improvement of the recovery rate will become more challenging. In the long term, waste disposal quantity is likely to follow the trend of population and economic growth, both of which are believed to be rising steadily in the coming 15 years. Hence, for planning purpose, we have allowed for some degree of waste growth rather than taking a risky no-change scenario. For the IWWMF project, we also have to take into account the weight reduction efficiency of generally around 80%, with 20% of waste residues still requiring disposal at landfill.

6. Based on the above and other relevant considerations, our current forecast is that the three existing landfills will be exhausted one by one from mid to late 2010s, starting with the SENT Landfill to be exhausted in 2013/14 due to its regional demand and limited remaining capacity. To address our imminent problem in waste treatment and disposal and to ensure sufficient landfill capacity for future need, we need to extend all three existing landfills to serve as the final repositories for residual waste and waste that cannot be recycled or treated further.

Waste reduction and recovery under the Policy Framework

7. The Government has set out a series of initiatives on waste reduction and recycling in the Policy Framework. They include (i) programmes on source separation

of waste to encourage the public to separate waste at source so as to increase the amount of local recyclables for collection; (ii) promotion of technology upgrading of the local recycling industry through the Innovation and Technology Fund, the Environment and Conservation Fund and various funds for small and medium enterprises; (iii) promotion of green procurement among government departments to boost the demand for green products as an outlet for recycled/green products and materials; (iv) implementation of producer responsibility schemes to encourage the public and the industry to engage more actively in waste recovery; (v) provision of more suitable sites for lease to the recycling industry under short-term tenancy; (vi) development of the EcoPark to provide long-term land for the recycling industry at affordable rent so as to facilitate and encourage investment by the industry; and (vii) publicity and public education to promote community participation in waste reduction and recycling.

8. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, we have already achieved an MSW recovery rate of 49% in 2009. The Administration will continue implementing the above-mentioned waste reduction and recycling initiatives.

Traffic and environmental impacts from the extension of the SENT Landfill

9. The EPD completed the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the SENT Landfill extension in 2008. The EIA studied in detail the potential environmental impacts of the extension scheme, covering air quality (including odour), ecology, noise, waste management, water quality, landfill gas as well as landscape and visual impacts, and recommended effective mitigation measures. The EIA also studied the five alternative options for the extension. The assessment of the options was presented and discussed at the meetings of Sai Kung District Council and the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs on 4 March 2008 and 27 October 2008 respectively. The study on air quality (including odour), noise and visual impacts covered the Tseung Kwan O area (including the LOHAS Park) and the Siu Sai Wan area on Hong Kong Island. According to the EIA report, with the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the anticipated environmental impacts are acceptable and will meet the relevant requirements under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) and its Technical Memorandum. The EIA report was accepted by the Advisory Council on the Environment in April 2008 and was approved by the EIAO Authority in May 2008.

10. In addition to the EIA study, a traffic impact assessment for the SENT Landfill extension scheme was also completed in 2008. The assessment concluded that the number of vehicles going to the extension will be similar to the current traffic flow to the

existing SENT Landfill. Hence, the traffic flow would be the same when the existing SENT Landfill is closed and the extension commences its operation. Thus, no adverse traffic impact due the extension is expected. However, due to the planned developments in the Tseung Kwan O area, such as the LOHAS Park, the design traffic flow at some junctions along Wan Po Road will operate unsatisfactorily, even without the traffic from the extension site. For two junctions along the Wan Po Road at which the unsatisfactory traffic situation could be contributed by the extension scheme, the EPD will carry out some improvement works in order to alleviate the problem before commissioning of the SENT Landfill extension.

Selection of Site with encroachment into the Clear Water Bay Country Park

11. The Administration attaches great importance to protecting the country parks and endeavours to maintain the integrity of country parks. In principle, country parks should not be used for landfill purpose and the option of encroaching into country park area should only be considered when there is no other alternative. In this context, in considering whether to extend the SENT landfill into the Clear Water Bay Country Park, the Administration has fully studied the case and all alternatives, and the Administration is of the view that if the SENT Landfill is not extended, the resulting environmental impact would be very substantial. After thorough deliberations, it was concluded that there would be no better alternative for solving the imminent waste problem. The proposed option of including 5 hectares of CWBCP land into the extension of 50 hectares of the SENT Landfill was hence pursued in the light of public interest.

Environmental Protection Department
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