

For Information

Legislative Council Panel on Development

Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area – Report on Stage 2 Community Engagement and Recommended Development Plan

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the outcome of the Stage 2 Community Engagement of the “Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area” (the Study) and the preparation of a Recommended Development Plan (RDP) for the area to serve as a basis for preparation of statutory town plans.

Background

2. The Panel was consulted on the Draft Development Plan (DDP) for the area to be released from the Closed Area during the Stage 2 Community Engagement of the Study on 24 November 2009 (LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(07)). A series of community engagement activities including briefing sessions, public forums and site visits were undertaken between October and December 2009. A total of 37 written submissions were received and they are available from the Study’s website (http://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/misc/FCA/frontier_eng/frontier_e.htm).

Major Public Views

3. Public opinions and comments gathered during the Stage 2 Community Engagement generally indicated that the proposals of the DDP were in the right direction in achieving a proper balance between development and conservation in accord with the principle of sustainable development. Nevertheless, some organizations and individuals expressed the following views on the DDP:

- (a) The few areas for development might not be conducive to enhancing integration and linkage with Shenzhen. Some urged for more hi-tech and commercial developments in this strategic boundary location;
- (b) Local communities represented by the rural committees considered the designation of their land as “Green Belt” or “Conservation Area” unfair. They demanded for either compensation or development opportunities;
- (c) Green groups were concerned about the possible proliferation of unauthorized developments and their impact on the natural environment upon the release of the Closed Area. They suggested restricting heavy vehicles from entering the area to prevent illegal dumping activities. They also considered that the proposed public-private partnership (PPP) approach for the Hoo Hok Wai area would not be effective in achieving conservation purposes. Instead, they proposed land resumption and non in-situ land exchange for conservation; and
- (d) Indigenous villagers requested that the areas of village-type development (“V”) be expanded to take account of the small house demand for the next 20-year-or-above rather than the current practice of a 10-year demand.

Responses to Public Views

4. Our main responses to the public views received are summarized as follows:

- (a) Due to its Closed Area status, the natural environment of the extensive areas within the Study Area remains undisturbed and is of high ecological and amenity value. Majority of the Study Area are fish ponds, hilly terrains, natural landscape areas, fungshui woodland, burial grounds and rivers/streams. It is located between the highly urbanised Shenzhen to its north and the existing new towns and proposed New Development Areas (NDAs) of the North East New Territories to its south. Excessive development should be avoided

in the Study Area so as to prevent urban sprawl and to preserve the existing ecological resources and rural environment. This is in line with the HK2030 Study, which provides the strategic planning framework for territorial development, that priority development areas will be in the NDAs and vacant and under-used land in the urban areas and new towns.

- (b) While preserving the ecologically and environmentally sensitive areas, we propose to make good use of vacant land or abandoned agricultural land. Appropriate scale and form of developments are proposed at suitable locations in the Study Area. For instance, we propose an eco-lodge development at Ma Tso Lung, residential developments at Kong Nga Po and Hung Lung Hang, and development corridors for cross-boundary trade/logistics activities, commercial and shopping uses, and recreation, leisure and tourism uses in the vicinity of major roads leading to/from the Boundary Control Points (BCPs). A range of uses including hi-tech, commercial and creative industries could be undertaken in these development corridors. The proposed land use framework could be re-examined in future taking into account any changing long-term development needs of Hong Kong;
- (c) Upon completion of the Study, statutory town plans would be prepared and areas to be covered by the plans would be brought under the control of the Town Planning Ordinance. Proper traffic management measures, if required, would also be considered by the Administration. The proposed PPP approach provides a mechanism for consideration of suitable development on land held under private ownership without compromising the ecological value in the area. This is in line with the New Nature Conservation Policy, in which both management agreements and PPP approach could be applied. San Tin and Hoo Hok Wai are included as one of the twelve priority sites identified for enhanced conservation; and
- (d) The designation of “V” zone, which takes into account the 10-year Small House demand, is in line with the existing policy. In the proposed “V” zone on the DDP, sufficient land has already been reserved to meet the 10-year demand for Small House development. The situation will be monitored and the boundary of the “V” zone

could be reviewed when necessary.

Recommended Development Plan

5. Taking into account the public comments from the Community Engagement, we have undertaken further technical assessments and, where necessary, revised some of the proposals in formulating a Recommended Development Plan (RDP) for the Study Area. In line with the objective to achieve a balance between development and conservation, the RDP (**Plan 1**) proposes a sustainable planning framework respecting the existing rural settings, local traditions and ways of life without compromising the ecologically and environmentally sensitive areas. The vision is to maintain the Study Area as a belt of conservation, cultural heritage and sustainable uses. Nature conservation and passive recreation and tourism uses are proposed in the eastern and western portions, whereas low-density residential and cultural tourism developments are proposed in the central portion to optimize the use of available land resources. Village settlements and agricultural land are scattered in the central portion, where it can also be used for promoting leisure farming, agri-tourism and various outdoor recreational activities to provide opportunities for regenerating the local economy.

6. To capitalize on the strategic boundary location, development corridors are proposed along the major cross-boundary transport routes near Lok Ma Chau and Man Kam To. The proposed Lok Ma Chau Development Corridor will have the potential to provide for commercial, shopping and entertainment facilities to support the development of the Lok Ma Chau Loop while the proposed Man Kam To Development Corridor may be developed for various cross-boundary supporting service and logistics uses to meet the needs of both Hong Kong and Shenzhen residents. Similar development corridor may also be identified along the strategic road link leading to the new Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai BCP in the future.

7. In addition to cross-boundary trade/logistics, commercial and shopping uses, the RDP has made provision for more high-value-added uses, such as hi-tech industries and creative industries to take place in the proposed development corridors as suggested during the Stage Two Community Engagement. Apart from the eco-lodge development and residential developments set out in paragraph 4(b) above, an additional 12-hectare site

has also been designated at Sha Tau Kok for recreation use to cater for a private-initiated proposal that is generally in line with the planning vision and provisions of the Study to make use of abandoned farmland for promoting leisure and green farming, cultural and recreation tourism.

Way Forward

8. Based on the RDP, statutory town plans will be prepared and exhibited under the provision of the Town Planning Ordinance before the Study Area is released from the Closed Area. Any further views on the land use proposals of the FCA would be considered in the statutory planning process.

Attachment

Plan 1 Recommended Development Plan

**Planning Department
Development Bureau
June 2010**

