

**For Discussion
on 10 November 2009**

LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Proposed Extension of Man Kam To Food Control Office

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the proposed project to extend Man Kam To Food Control Office (MKTFCO) and seeks Members' advice on the proposal.

Background

2. By virtue of the agreement between the governments of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Shenzhen in 1998, vehicles carrying fresh foods like vegetables, fish, meat, poultry and eggs from the Mainland must enter Hong Kong through the Man Kam To Boundary Control Point. Frontline staff of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department carry out random inspection at the MKTFCO to inspect vehicles of imported food, verify certification documents accompanying each food consignment, check the seals on vehicles, and collect samples of various food categories for chemical, microbiological and other tests on a daily basis.

Justifications for the extension project

3. The MKTFCO came into operation in 1996. It is a modest establishment with 5 ancillary parking spaces designed to inspect vehicles under 5 tonnes. With the steady increase in volume of food supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong (the number of food vehicles increased from 340 per day in 2007 to the present 400 per day), and vehicles of 5 tonnes or above becoming more and more common, the existing facilities have become inadequate for CFS' food inspection work, particularly during peak hours (e.g. bunching of vegetable vehicles in crossing the border in the evening).

4. The Administration is also in the process of preparing a new Food Safety Bill, the proposals of which includes enhancing control of imported food of certain high risk categories. When the legislation comes into force, the workload at the MKTFCO is expected to increase accordingly.

5. After the completion of the extension project, it is expected that the number of food vehicles inspected can be increased from about 50 000 to 100 000 per year with appropriate manpower arrangement.

Project scope

6. We have reserved four sites near the existing MKTFCO for the extension project. A site plan is at Annex A. The total site area is around 10 270m².

7. The proposed project is to provide additional food inspection facilities near the existing MKTFCO. The scope of the project includes:

- (i) site formation including demolition of existing structures;
- (ii) road widening and upgrading work of the road between the combined sites (Sites A and B) and Site C to facilitate maneuvering of large vehicles;
- (iii) provision of 23 parking spaces capable of fitting large vehicles (with capacity up to 44 tonnes) for inspection and detention;
- (iv) ancillary facilities including three inspection rooms, six interview rooms, two duty rooms, one composite house for detector dogs to rest, three walk-in freezer rooms and three walk-in chiller rooms with back-up power supply/emergency generator for storage of detained food.

8. The outline layout plan is attached at Annex B.

9. The total capital cost of the project is estimated at approximately \$176.1 million (in money-of-the-day prices).

Public consultation

10. The Government consulted the Ta Kwu Ling Rural Committee and Sheung Shui Rural Committee on 25 May 2009. Both supported the project but expressed concern over the noise and light pollution it may cause. They asked that mitigation measures be taken to minimize the nuisance to villagers living in the vicinity. Taking into account their concerns, the Government will adopt appropriate design measures to minimize the noise level and select suitable lighting and adjust the lighting angle in order to minimize light nuisance to nearby villagers as far as possible.

11. The Government consulted the North District Council on 11 June 2009. The District Council agreed that the Government needed additional facilities for inspection of imported food and raised no objection to the project. We will take into account their views on the proposed project, such as ensuring the site entrance is wide enough in order to reduce the traffic impact.

Traffic Impact Assessment

12. A consultancy study was conducted to assess the traffic impact of the proposed project. The consultant concluded that, with the recommended junction improvement and widening of site entrance, the local road network should be able to cope with the traffic flow generated by the proposed project.

Environmental Impact Assessment

13. This project is not a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, yet we have conducted a Preliminary Environmental Review Study. The Review Study confirmed that the proposed project will not generate insurmountable environmental problems. The identified construction and operational concerns can be resolved through implementation of appropriate pollution control measures, careful design of the layout and related environmental measures.

Implementation programme

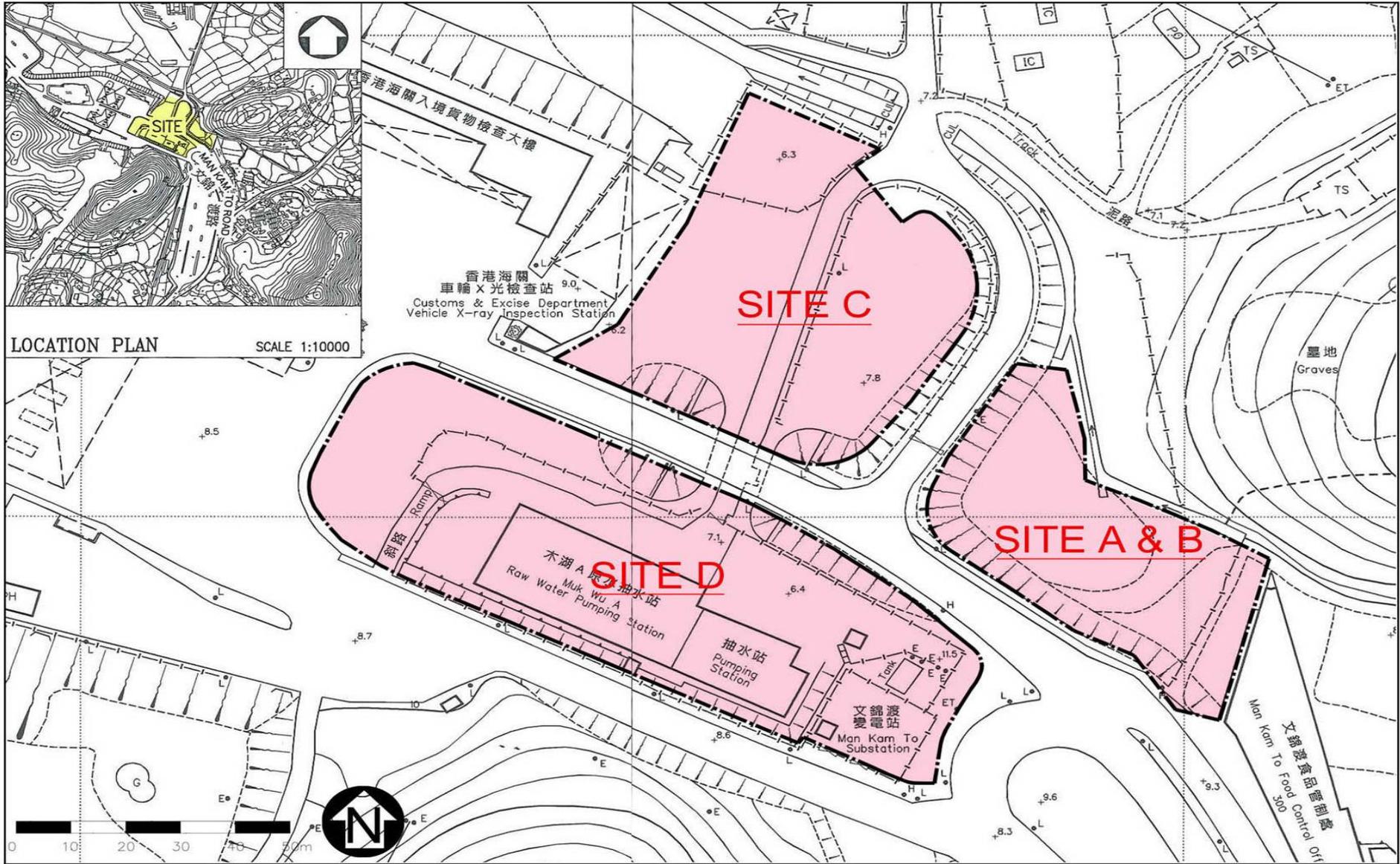
14. We plan to make a submission to the Public Works Subcommittee to upgrade the proposed project to Category A of the Public Works Programme in December 2009 and to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee in January 2010. Construction works are expected to commence in mid 2010 for completion in late 2012.

Advice sought

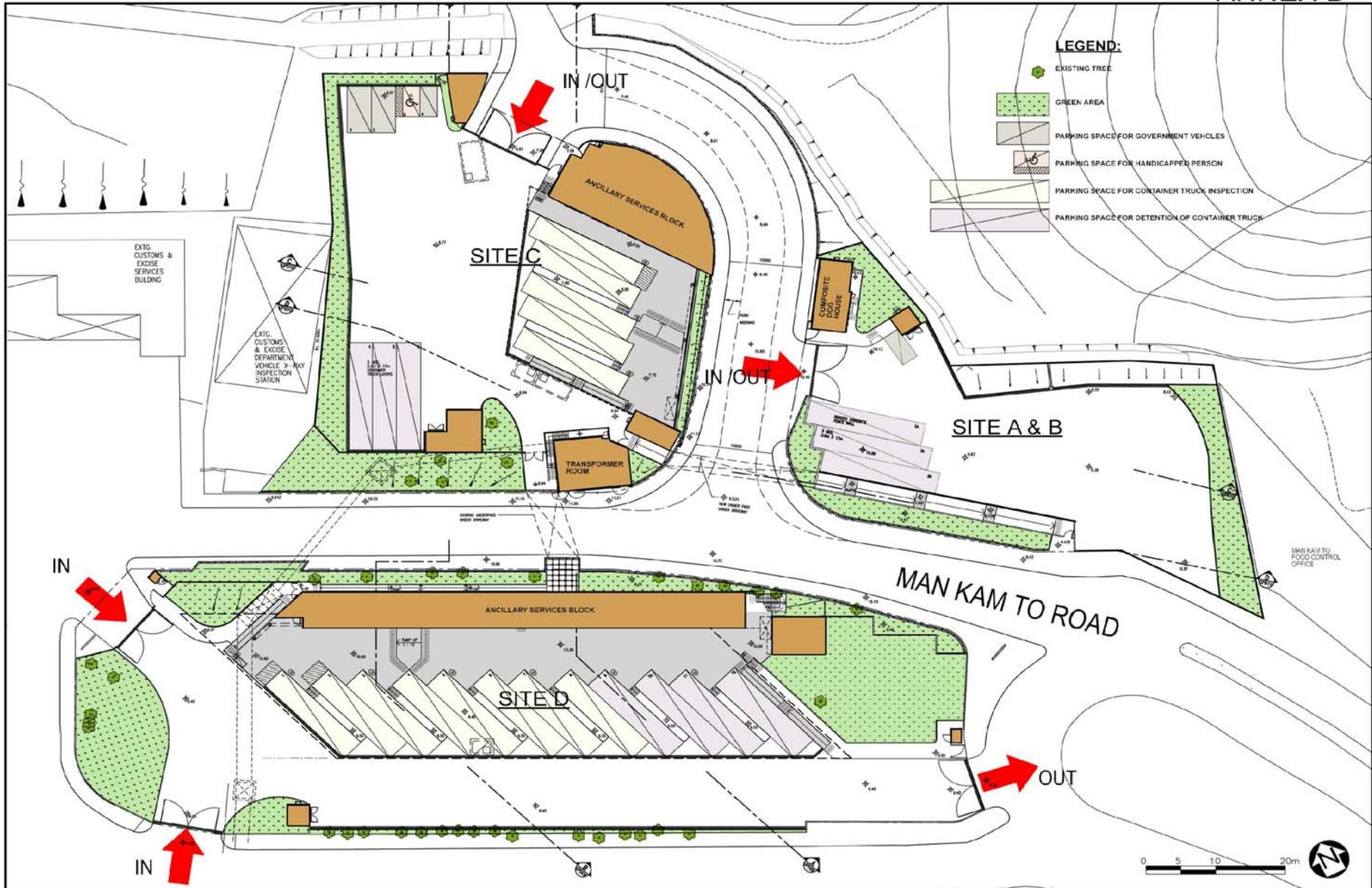
15. Members are invited to comment on the proposed project.

**Food and Health Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
November 2009**

ANNEX A



SITE PLAN



OUTLINE LAYOUT PLAN