



Legco Panel on Development Special Meeting

The Government's strategy to enhance land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development

Oral Presentation by the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong

Our Association stresses that geoconservation should be incorporated into the land supply site selection and development criteria. Geological Heritage Impact Assessment should be conducted in conjunction with Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

We advocate the “Nature in the City” principle which encourages on-site preservation of geological features and natural landscape within development areas; unveiling and highlighting the geological and geomorphological features, enhancing appreciation of users and restoring features to a more natural state.

Priority for land supply should be given to redevelopment of under-used industrial areas and degraded lowland areas of the New Territories. Reclamations should be minimised as they have major implications on both landscape and the environment.

Where reclamations are inevitable, offshore reclamations around developed areas or extension from existing reclamations are preferred. We object to any further reclamations along natural shorelines, including those precious remaining ones in the City and in pristine areas such as Po Toi islands. Subject to strict scrutiny, however, offshore reclamations stemming out from short stretches of low value natural shorelines may be acceptable to us.

Natural shorelines around our city are a sharp contrast to artificial constructions and contribute to the uniquely attractive scenery in Hong Kong. These remaining natural assets are already very rare and therefore need to be strictly preserved. An example is Tseung Kwan O Area 131 which is on the preliminary list of site selection. This is a gem of coastal geodiversity around our city area. Any reclamation will be strongly objected.



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Similarly around Tolo Harbour any remaining natural shorelines are valuable assets for the new towns as they are well compatible with our “Nature in the City” thinking. They are readily accessible to residents offering them a quick escape from artificial constructions.

Where a reclamation is adopted after vigorous justifications, these should be created to form an attractive environment with a diversity of layouts and waterfronts. As opposed to a smooth shoreline, considerations should be given to the incorporation of indentations, marinas, promontories, piers, lagoons, channels etc. Provided that such artificial shorelines are also highly accessible, this could contribute to an interesting built-environment and provide new view points. Present preservation of the Kai Tak runway and the adjacent channel is a good example of this principle.

Caverns are overall less damaging to the visual landscape. However, access roads and entrances will need to be designed with a natural outlook. Caverns for open usage should wherever practical feature exposed rock faces in order to enhance public appreciation of geological science and natural aesthetics. Re-use of rock materials extracted from caverns should be encouraged for nearby landscaping and decoration design.

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