

Planning and Engineering Study on Future Land Use at the Ex-Lamma Quarry Area at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island – Feasibility Study

Public Comment on the Proposals

Dear Panel on Development,

I have been involved professionally in sustainable development issues for more than 15 years, and lived on Lamma Island for 13 years, and have visited the ex-quarry on many occasions. I would like to share with you my professional views on the Stage 1 Community Engagement, and suggest an alternative development proposal.

Comments on the Stage 1 Proposals

1. Lamma Island plays a unique role in the fabric of Hong Kong as its “back-garden”, a car-free island easily accessible from Central which is attractive to visitors because of its quaint low-key feel, home-grown industries, natural beauty and wildlife. **The project-proponents have recognised this, but failed to respond with Options that sufficiently sensitive and appropriate.**
2. **The project proponents have effectively only provided one Option (with three variations) for the development of the quarry, all with mixed-use housing, tourism and watersport components.** The result is confused and similar to a mini Discovery Bay – hardly adding value to our SAR.
3. Hong Kong has many needs and the Lamma ex-quarry is a poor fit for making a significant contribution to increasing the supply of new housing. Providing housing for 2,800 – 7,000 people is insignificant to solving Hong Kong’s housing issues, and will only benefit a privileged few. **Options should be provided for the development of the site that are more focused and do not include housing.**
4. Lamma residents, particularly in Sok Kwu Wan and southern Lamma are frustrated by the ferry service, medical and other facilities available to them, and limited economic opportunities open to them. However, it is far from evident that creating a new community on the ex-quarry site, will result in such needs being met – these legitimate desires should be examined more explicitly.
5. The development of the ex-Lamma quarry, and potentially nearly doubling its residents, will have impacts on all of Lamma (e.g. footpaths may need to be widened, and more public toilets created). **A development plan for the whole of Lamma is needed, which factors in the direct and indirect consequences of developing the ex-quarry, and looks to create mutually beneficial solutions.**

An Alternative Option – An Eco-Park to Benefit Hong Kong

6. The Chief Executive is committed to the sustainable development of Hong Kong, and new environmental policies were unveiled in the policy address to support such development. However, fundamental behavioural shifts will be

needed in society if we can truly shift to a Green Economy. Current awareness raising activities are rather unimaginative and dull – **there is a real and pressing need to ramp up education efforts to foster support for government policies.**

7. **The Lamma ex-quarry is the perfect location to create a truly unique Eco Park dedicated to sustainable living that would be a good fit with the existing culture of Lamma, of real value in preparing local people for the challenges of a new way of life more in tune with the natural resource constraints of our planet, and providing a major new tourist attraction for Hong Kong.** It could use the Eden Project in England as its inspirational start point, but designed to enhance the natural features of the quarry, and taking full advantage of its coastal location to add in strong marine components.

I would encourage Legislators to request to the project proponents that -

- i) the development of the ex-quarry be examined in the context of a development plan for all of Lamma.
- ii) more imaginative and fundamentally different Options be provided, including some that do not include housing for Stage 2 consultations.
- iii) this suggestion for an Eco-Park be seriously considered as one of the Options for Stage 2 consultations.

Yours sincerely,

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I am an independent ecologist based in Hong Kong, and have nothing to gain financially from the solution suggested.

Project Eden in England – The Inspiration For An Eco-Park on Lamma Island



Around one million people visit Project Eden in England every year



Project Eden was also built in an ex-quarry



Visitors enjoy food immersed in a green environment



There are many undercover areas in case of bad weather



Learning about sustainable living can be fun



Exhibits are well-designed, thought-provoking and interactive