

Legislative Council Panel on Development

PWP Item No. 399DS – Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns

Regarding the following question about the captioned from Hon. Tony Tse to the Chairman of the Panel on Development on 9 December 2020:

“The objective of the Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to Caverns project, which costs over \$40 billion, is to increase the land supply for housing. According to the reply from Mr Michael WONG, the Secretary for Development to LegCo Members earlier this month, it could take 10 years or more to transform a piece of "primitive land" into a "spade-ready site" and from construction of housing to its completion.

Paragraph 6 of the reply from the Administration mentioned that a planning and engineering study for the released site would be conducted in good time. I hope that the Administration will elaborate "in good time", by specifying in detail the expected schedule and commencement years of different stages from land rezoning, design and planning of infrastructure, community and transport facilities, to the completion of the flats, to avoid the failure of immediate use of the 28-hectare site of the sewage treatment works to be released in 2031 for residential or other suitable developments.”

The response from the Administration is as follows:

2. According to prevailing practice, it generally takes about six years or more, depending on the scale, actual conditions and constraints of individual sites, to transform a piece of "primitive land" into a "spade-ready site" for subsequent housing or other developments. It starts with conducting a planning and engineering study to assess in detail the impact of different land uses and development options on various aspects such as environment, traffic, geotechnical, infrastructure, community facilities and urban design etc., so as to determine whether there are insurmountable issues and to formulate preliminary proposals. Thereafter, rezoning process will commence under the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131), in conjunction with the detailed engineering and architectural design for the proposed roadworks, infrastructure and community facilities, and gazettal of the development scheme. When the detailed designs and estimated project costs are ready, the Administration will seek funds for the related works, and

upon approval, arrange to resume (if required) and clear the land for proceeding with site formation and construction of infrastructure and community facilities, etc.

3. Regarding the "Relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works (STSTW) to caverns" (the Project), the Drainage Services Department is implementing it in full swing, targeting to release the existing STSTW site of about 28 hectares for residential and other uses beneficial to people's livelihood. On the timing to start the planning and engineering study, we consider the closer the possible to the release time of the STSTW site, the more precise to reflect the prevailing community need on land uses and facilities, thus enabling a better planning. Taking into account the time required for the above-mentioned land rezoning process, we expect the planning and engineering study for the released site to commence in around 2025. As the time required for individual steps of the land rezoning process may vary with the actual circumstances encountered, it is difficult at this stage to set a specific timetable and commencement year for each task and procedure.

**Development Bureau
December 2020**