

Letterhead of OFFICE OF CHRISTINE LOH LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR

Urgent-By Fax Only

Hon. Edward Ho,
Chair,
LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands & Works,
Legislative Council

8 March 1999

Dear Edward,

Meeting to discuss South East Kowloon Development, 9 March 1999

I understand that the Administration will be discussing the planning objectives for South East Kowloon Development at tomorrow's meeting of the Planning, Lands & Works Panel. I am somewhat concerned that the Administration still intends to proceed with its plans without adequate consultation. At a seminar held on 19 February with over 100 people who had objected to the original scheme, we were presented with the objectives and expected to reach a consensus in one afternoon. I hope that the Administration gives LegCo members more time to think about the fundamental issues underpinning the planning of this important development.

To assist the discussion I have summarised the Administration's objectives, together with the objectives that emerged from Legco's unanimous support for Tsang Yok Sing's Amendment 1 to my motion on this issue on 27 January 1999. Although the motion debate did not address all of the Government's objectives, members comments during the debate gives an indication of their support for the objectives. These are summarised in Table 1 below. Members also expressed support for wider consultation on the development plans.

Although the Secretary for Planning, Environment & Lands indicated that representatives of Government would work with Legco to formulate a more acceptable development plan, I think that it would be better to widen the consultation to beyond LegCo and try and harness the collective wisdom of the community on this important plan.

¹ *That this Council urges the Government to revise the proposal for the development of SE Kowloon, undertake a thorough consultation process and formulate a plan which is both visionary and sustainable and seeks to provide livable communities to meet the public's 21st century expectations; the area to be reclaimed under the plan should be reduced to protect the harbour's resources; the Government should also carry out urban renewal expeditiously in the northern part of the site in recognition of the urgent public housing needs and to provide the space required for resettling the residents displaced in the process of redeveloping some of the other older parts of Kowloon; at the same time, there must be a comprehensive railway development programme to ensure that the construction of the railway network synchronizes with the development of the area - Tsang Yok-sing.*

Table 1: Summary of Government Objectives for South East Kowloon and LegCo's stated views from the Motion Debate on 27 January 1999

Government Objectives	LegCo comments/stated objectives
1. To accommodate urban growth	To formulate a plan which is both visionary and sustainable
2. to provide sites for residential development to meet the territorial demand. by 2011, with provision of G/IC facilities and open space	To provide livable communities to meet the public's ¹ 21 st century expectations
3. to accommodate a share of expansion and hub functions, especially business and tourism	The Government plan has too much commercial space ² and tourism will be adversely affected by reclamation ³
4. to accommodate major transport links and other infrastructure	To provide a comprehensive railway development programme to ensure that the construction of the railway network synchronises with the development of the area. Other members commented that mass transit should be the priority ⁴ .
5. to establish a comprehensive open space network, including the Metropolitan Park and a waterfront promenade	To reduce the area reclaimed in the Government's plan to protect the harbour resources
6. to provide opportunities for urban renewal in the adjacent hinterland by providing linked sites/decanting sites	To carry out urban renewal expeditiously in the northern part of the site in recognition of the urgent public housing needs and to provide the space required for resettling the residents displaced in the process of redeveloping some of the other older parts of Kowloon
7. to make good the deficits in the provision of open space and G/IC facilities in the adjacent hinterland	Open Space should be distributed over a wider area ⁵
8. to rectify water pollution problems in the Kai Tak Nullah	Kai Tak Nullah should be reclaimed ⁶

Yours sincerely,

Christine Loh

c.c Hon. Members of the Panel on Planning, Lands & Works

² Hon. Edward Ho, Hon. Ho Chung Tai, Hon. Tang Siu Tong

³ Hon. Howard Young

⁴ Hon. Law Chi Kwong, Edward Ho, Tang Siu Tong, Hui Cheung Ching

⁵ Hon. James To

⁶ Hon. Hui Cheung Ching