

**For discussion
on 7 April 2000**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1580/99-00(03)

**Legislative Council
Panel on Environmental Affairs**

Wan Chai East and North Point Sewerage Stage 2 Works

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' support for a proposal to seek Finance Committee's approval to upgrade part of Public Works Project Item 204DS, namely Wan Chai East and North Point sewerage stage 2 works, to Category A at an estimated cost of \$1,476.9 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices for carrying out sewerage improvement works in North Point district.

Background

2. The Wan Chai East and North Point Sewerage Master Plan (SMP) is one of 16 SMPs developed by the Administration to identify the sewerage infrastructure necessary for meeting population demand and improving water quality in coastal waters. The Wan Chai East and North Point SMP study was completed in August 1994. Stage 1 works, which involve the construction of trunk sewers and branch sewers in Wan Chai East, commenced in April 1998 and are scheduled for completion in July 2004.

3. The present project covers the stage 2 works which involve the construction of trunk sewers in North Point and re-construction of the inlet pumping station at North Point Sewage Screening Plant (NPSSP). We completed the design for stage 2 works in January 2000.

Project Scope and Nature

4. The part of 204DS which we now propose to upgrade to Category A comprises-

- (a) construction of approximately 3.1 kilometres of trunk sewers (with diameter ranging from 900 to 1 800 mm) along Causeway Road, Electric Road and Java Road in North Point, and their associated branch sewer connections; and
- (b) re-construction of the inlet pumping station in the existing NPSSP and the construction of associated ancillary works.

Justifications

5. The majority of the sewers in North Point were constructed more than 30 years ago. Although there have been local improvements to cater for the developments in the district from time to time, the existing sewerage system is inadequate for providing sufficient capacity to cater for future sewage flows generated from new developments. At present, some critical sections of the existing sewers, such as the trunk sewers along Electric Road/Java Road leading to the NPSSP, have nearly reached their maximum capacity with sewage backing up during the peak flow hours. In the short term, the problem can be kept under control by undertaking an intensive desilting programme to make sure that the existing sewerage system function at its maximum capacity to avoid any overflow.

6. In the longer term, say, beyond 2006 if we do not carry out the upgrading works, we anticipate that sections of the existing sewerage system in North Point district will begin to overflow due to additional sewage flows generated from the new developments in the district, such as developments at the Mount Butler Quarry site (by 2009), and the Oil Street Government Supplies Department site (by 2005). To provide sufficient sewerage facilities for these developments, we propose to increase the capacity of the sewerage system by constructing new trunk sewers of larger diameters so that the system will have sufficient capacity to meet future demands up to the year 2021. We will construct trunk sewers at steeper gradients and at deeper levels to avoid existing utilities and to provide adequate depths for future branch sewer connections. We also propose to reconstruct the inlet pumping station in conjunction with the proposed trunk sewers to provide additional pumping capacity to cater for the deeper levels of the new sewers and to meet the growing sewage flow demands. A map showing the location of the proposed works is at Annex.

7. On completion of the trunk sewers and the inlet pumping station, we will reconstruct branch sewers with structural and capacity problems under the remainder of 204DS in mid 2003 for completion in late 2006. Completion of all sewerage upgrading works will resolve the sewerage capacity problem within the area and provide a sustainable system to meet future demands.

8. We intend to start the stage 2 works in January 2001 for completion in January 2006. We estimate that the project will create some 450 new jobs comprising 120 at the professional/technical and 330 at the operational levels.

Financial Implications

9. The capital cost of the proposed works is estimated to be \$1,476.9 million in MOD prices. Despite an increase in the length of sewers to be maintained upon the completion of the project, we estimate that there will be a net reduction in the annual recurrent expenditure arising from the proposed sewerage works of \$0.2 million due to less maintenance work being required on existing

sewers. Based on the current expenditure on operation and maintenance of sewerage facilities, the proposed works by itself will lead to a 0.03% decrease in the recurrent expenditure of provision of sewage services. This will be taken into account in determining sewage charges.

Public Consultation

10. The proposed works are all located within Eastern District. We consulted the Eastern District Board in September 1996 on the proposed works in North Point, including the temporary traffic arrangements and environmental mitigation measures during construction. The Eastern District Board supported the implementation of the proposed works. The scope of the project remains unchanged since the consultation and we will report the progress of the works to the Board prior to the commencement of the works contracts and during construction.

Environmental Implications

11. We completed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study in September 1996 which concluded that, with the implementation of odour control units in the inlet pumping station, the environmental impacts arising from the project could be mitigated to within established criteria. The Advisory Council on the Environment endorsed the EIA in October 1996 without conditions.

12. The proposed inlet pumping station is a designated project under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499). The EIA completed in 1996 was based on the forecast of sewage flow in 2011. The Director of Environmental Protection carried out an Environmental Review in February 1999 for the revised design flow planned for 2021 and concluded that the EIA findings remain applicable.

Environment and Food Bureau
April 2000