

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON HOME AFFAIRS

Performance Venue on West Kowloon Reclamation and Sports Complex in South East Kowloon

Introduction

This paper briefly outlines the current position with regard to the planning of a performance venue on the West Kowloon Reclamation. It also briefly outlines issues related to the possible development of a sports complex in South East Kowloon.

Performance Venue on West Kowloon Reclamation

2. The Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA) published the Final Report of the *Study on the Feasibility of a New Performance Venue for Hong Kong* in February 1999. The Study concluded that –

- (a) Hong Kong needs a new international performance venue to meet growing demand for such a facility, to support the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong, to promote event tourism as well as to promote Hong Kong as the event capital of Asia;
- (b) the proposed project should be an internationally famous landmark and should become an attraction in its own right;
- (c) to ensure its viability, the venue should include commercial areas, as well as core performance facilities and supporting facilities. Core facilities should include a theatre with around 1,500 to 2,200 seats and a larger and more flexible performance space (in the form of a semi-open amphitheatre), to cater for different types of events and capable of accommodating up to 8,000 seats;
- (d) a site of 5.5 hectares on the West Kowloon Reclamation (WKR) has been identified for the purpose of building a performance venue; and

- (e) the entire southern section of the WKR should be developed into a new arts, culture and tourist district which would create a critical mass of activities around the new performance venue.

3. Having considered carefully the findings of the HKTA study, the government supports the recommendation to provide a core facility of 1,500 – 2,200 seats. As proposed in the HKTA's Final Report, there should be other cultural and performing arts facilities around the new performance venue so that they would lend support to each other, thereby creating a critical mass of important cultural activities in that district.

4. In his 1999 Policy Address, the Chief Executive has undertaken to create a new look for the Victoria Harbour such that the future waterfront promenade (part of which is on the WKR) would provide arts, cultural and entertainment opportunities that will enrich our quality of life and attract tourists with our unique culture. At a meeting of the Executive Council on 16 November 1999, the Council ADVISED and the Chief Executive ORDERED that the use of the southern portion of the WKR should be fundamentally reviewed to facilitate the development of a world-class integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district.

5. To this end, an open competition on the future development and urban design for the WKR waterfront will be held. The government is currently drawing up the detailed conditions for the open competition. It is intended that the development would be primarily private sector led. When the details of the competition have been finalized, we shall formally brief the Legislative Council.

Sports Complex in South East Kowloon

6. A site of about ten hectares has been earmarked for the development of a sports stadium in the outline concept plan of the South East Kowloon development. A study started in November to ascertain the feasibility of the various land use proposals in the area. The study will last for about 15 months, with its findings due to become available in early 2001.

7. Separately, we are studying the issue of strategic sports and recreational venue requirements, including the need for a major new stadium. In our study, we will have regard to the recommendations set out in the relevant section of the revised Chapter 4 of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and

Guidelines on "Recreation and Open Space", which recommends that –

- (a) indoor sports stadia should be provided on the basis of need. Whether or not a new sports stadium is the best form of provision to meet the needs of the national sports associations, and other aspects relating to the implementation of the concept, i.e., project feasibility, design, management, capacity of the stadium, etc., should be subject to further investigation;
- (b) provision of outdoor stadia should similarly be based on need. Also, project feasibility and other implementation aspects should be subject to separate studies; and
- (c) apart from high-level football matches and international standard athletic competition, outdoor stadia could also be used for other large-scale open air entertainment and activities.

8. Assuming that all the funding and statutory procedures related to the South East Kowloon development proceed smoothly (these will include securing funding approval from the Legislative Council, seeking approval for outline zoning plans and reclamation works, and completion of environmental impact assessments), land formation and supporting infrastructure for the proposed stadium site will be completed in the year 2006. Depending on the final design of the stadium, construction works would take about three years to complete.

Home Affairs Bureau
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