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Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Background brief on Feasibility Study for Further Development of Tseung Kwan O

Purpose

An item on "Feasibility Study for Further Development of Tseung Kwan O - Stage 3 public consultation" will be discussed at the meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 27 January 2004. This paper sets out some background information on the Feasibility Study for Further Development of Tseung Kwan O (TKO) and views expressed by members of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (the PLW Panel) and the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) on the subject.

Tseung Kwan O New Town

2. The Executive Council decided to develop TKO into a new town in 1982. The Government subsequently decided in 1987 and 1988 to proceed with the Phase II and Phase III developments with the planned population revised from the original 175 000 to 325 000 and 450 000 respectively. The current Outline Zoning Plan envisages that the population of the new town will increase to 480 000 upon completion of the planned and committed developments. Currently, the TKO New Town provides home for about 310 000 people.

3. The Territorial Development Strategy Review completed in 1998 identified TKO New Town as a new development area having potential for further development. Preliminary assessment by the Administration indicated that further development of TKO to accommodate 560 000 people was feasible by developing a combination of land based sites in Pak Shing Kok and further reclamation in Junk Bay.

4. In October 2001, the Administration published the Recommended Development Strategy for the South East New Territories Sub-region in which the mutually supportive and supplementary relations between the TKO New Town and the rest of the Sub-region was highlighted. The Strategy recommended enhanced linkages between TKO and the rest of the Sub-region in terms of transportation, recreation and technological developments.

Feasibility Study for further development of TKO

5. The Finance Committee approved on 24 May 2002 a provision of \$40 million for commissioning a feasibility study for further development of TKO (the Feasibility Study). The Feasibility Study, which focuses on the following, commenced in July 2002 -

- (a) measures to enhance the overall planning, design and landscape of TKO New Town;
- (b) optimum level of population and development for TKO New Town;
- (c) the most desirable implementation timetable, preferred alignment, form and feasibility of the Western Coast Road (WCR), which will link TKO New Town with East Kowloon and the rest of the territory;
- (d) the most desirable implementation timetable, preferred alignment, form and feasibility of the Cross Bay Link (CBL), which will link southeast TKO with the WCR;
- (e) infrastructure provision for the industrial development in Area 137;
- (f) feasibility of and development plan for the further reclamation in Junk Bay;
- (g) development plan for Pak Shing Kok; and
- (h) measures to provide more recreational and community facilities including the possibility of water sports facilities in TKO New Town.

6. During the discussions of the proposed Feasibility Study at the PLW Panel in December 2001 and at the Public Works Subcommittee in May 2002, Members made the following views -

- (a) a people-oriented approach should be adopted to work out an integrated development plan for the TKO New Town;

- (b) innovative planning concepts taking into account building height, development density and outlook etc. should be adopted, and in planning for new public housing, emphasis should be given to the diversity and aesthetics of the design of the housing blocks;
- (c) the Administration should expedite the implementation of the WCR project and dual 4-lane or at least dual 3-lane should be planned for WCR;
- (d) coastal alignment of the WCR would seriously affect the existing residents and traders in Lei Yue Mun and would hinder the development of Lei Yue Mun;
- (e) sea transport should be considered as an additional means to cope with the external traffic demand of TKO in the longer-term;
- (f) a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor leisure facilities should be provided for the TKO community, and the water channels in TKO should be straightened to facilitate the conduct of water sports/recreation activities; and
- (g) measures should be put in place to prevent foul smell and water pollution problems, and the feasibility of linking the existing water channels in TKO should be examined.

Stage 1 Public Consultation

7. Stage 1 public consultation on the Feasibility Study was conducted in September and October 2002 involving consulting the Sai Kung District Council (SKDC), holding a public forum in TKO and the distribution of newsletters to TKO residents. The majority of SKDC members considered that the transport infrastructure (in particular the WCR) should be provided in a timely manner, TKO's supporting role to tourism development in Sai Kung should be enhanced, the development density should be reduced, further reclamation for substantial housing provision should be avoided, more cultural and recreational facilities should be provided, and more job opportunities for TKO residents should be created.

8. As regards the public forum and the written submissions received, there was a general sentiment against further reclamation in TKO. There were suggestions of reducing the development density in Town Centre South, retaining Pak Shing Kok for low-density development, development of the eastern drainage channel for leisure activities, and early implementation of other recreational facilities in TKO. There was also concern about the impact of more housing provision on the property prices in TKO.

Stage 2 Public Consultation

9. Taking into account the views received in the Stage 1 public consultation, the Administration formulated four development themes for the Stage 2 public consultation -

Theme 1: No further reclamation

Theme 2: Maximize recreation potential - recreation and water sports

Theme 3: Maximize development with water frontage - landscape crescent

Theme 4: Maximize housing and recreation development

10. The Administration expressly stated in its consultation digest that it had decided not to consider Development Theme 4 further as the public had concern on the provision of more housing flats in TKO. The total TKO population would be 460 000 under Development Theme 1 and 495 000 under Development Themes 2 and 3. The area of further reclamation under Development Theme 2 and Theme 3 would be 41 hectares and 55 hectares respectively. The consultation digest, together with the relevant paper for the PLW Panel, was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1485/02-03 dated 28 April 2003.

11. The Stage 2 public consultation commenced in May 2003. The PLW Panel was consulted on 2 May 2003, at which the Administration advised that it would also consult SKDC and the Town Planning Board. There would be forums with TKO residents, TKO South and North Area Committees members, professional bodies, green groups and other interest bodies. Local residents' views on the proposed development themes would be invited through distribution of a questionnaire in the relevant newsletter.

12. The Administration also advised that it was carrying out a comparative assessment of the tunnel and coastal options for the WCR and would consult the relevant District Councils in round August 2003.

13. Panel members in general did not support further reclamation in TKO for housing development. Members also expressed the following views during the Panel discussion on 2 May 2003 -

- (a) further development in TKO should aim at addressing the needs of the residents in TKO and should not focus on housing development;
- (b) consideration should be given to improving the urban design and quality of life, and reducing the population density;

- (c) no matter which development theme would finally be adopted, the total population of TKO should be capped at 460 000 and the population density should not be further increased;
- (d) the population for Pak Shing Kok should be capped at 5 000 even for Development Themes 2 and 3;
- (e) the land in TKO Town Centre South reserved for housing development for an additional 32 000 people under Development Theme 1 might be used for the provision of open space and recreation facilities;
- (f) the Drainage Channel might be developed for international races, such as canoeing, and training ground for different kinds of water sports; and
- (g) dual 4-lane, or at least dual 3-lane, should be planned for the WCR.

14. At the Panel's request, the Administration had provided a comparison of the plot ratio and population density of TKO Town Centre South under the current Outline Zoning Plan, Development Themes 1, 2 and 3 to those of other new towns as follows -

	Average Plot Ratio	Population Density (persons per hectare)
Tseung Kwan O Outline Zoning Plan S/TKO/13 (Town Centre South only)	6.8	965
Development Theme 1	3.5	561
Development Theme 2	4.5	632
Development Theme 3	4.5	553
Shatin	5.0	592
Ma On Shan	5.0	516
Tin Shui Wai	8.0	959

Hong Kong 2030 Study

15. The feasibility of reducing the development intensity in the urban areas and new development areas is one of the major planning issues raised in the Stage 3 Public Consultation paper for the Hong Kong 2030 Study. A question put forth in the consultation paper is whether lower development densities should be adopted, e.g. from plot ratio of 8 to 5 in existing built-up areas or from 6.5 to 5 for new development areas.

16. At the PLW Panel meeting on 25 November 2003 to discuss the Study, the Permanent Secretary for Planning, Lands and Works (Planning and Lands) illustrated the direction on quality living environment by referring to the case of TKO. She said that TKO had been put under extreme development pressure and as a result, was criticized as a concrete jungle. With the slowing down in population growth and housing needs, there was scope for revisiting the planned population and development density for the area. A Member opined that TKO was a planning blunder. The Director of Planning pointed out that the development of TKO should be viewed in its historical perspective. At the time of planning in the early 1990's, there was a great demand for housing and it was then envisaged that the rapid population growth and hence the housing demand would sustain in the future years. As the population growth in Hong Kong had slowed down, there was now an opportunity for the community to discuss whether development density should be generally reduced.

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