

For discussion
on 25 July 2005

**Legislative Council Panel on Economic Services
Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works**

Proposed Domestic Heliport Development

Introduction

At the joint-Panel meeting held on 28 February 2005, Members passed the following motion –

“That, the Panel on Economic Services and the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works urge the Government to expedite the provision of a permanent commercial heliport and associated facilities in the central business district of the Hong Kong Island, and, under the principle of no unlawful reclamation, allow the heliport at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre to accommodate both commercial uses by helicopter operators and government uses.”

2. This paper discusses the difficulties in identifying a suitable location for a permanent commercial heliport within the Central Business District (CBD), and consults Members on the proposed development of a Government helipad at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) to accommodate both Government and commercial uses.

Site Search for a Permanent Commercial Heliport

3. As explained in our previous Panel paper (LC Paper No CB(1)376/04-05(04)), the Government has conducted repeated rounds of site searches since 1998 to identify a suitable site for developing a permanent domestic heliport. The difficulties in finding a suitable site stem mainly from the scarcity of available land within the CBD and the need to meet stringent safety-related requirements (that the site must be at surface-level along the waterfront and with unobstructed flight paths, etc.).

4. In the light of the LegCo motion passed in February 2005, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of all available Government sites along the harbour-front stretching from Sheung Wan in the west to the eastern end of the Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII). A total of 19 sites have been identified and reviewed but none has been found suitable either because they are occupied by irreplaceable existing uses or have been earmarked for essential future uses; or they fail to meet the safety-related requirements. A summary of these sites and our assessment are detailed in Annex A.

5. We come to the conclusion that other than the site in front of the Western Park Sports Centre in Sheung Wan identified earlier, no other suitable sites within the CBD could be identified. We fully appreciate the concerns expressed by Members over the Sheung Wan site and recognize that, strictly speaking, it lies only on the fringe of CBD but not within CBD. If Members continue to view this site undesirable, the only other alternative would be to extend our site search into any future harbour-front areas that might be reclaimed under Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII). We are **not** proposing to reclaim any land for the heliport but it is possible that parts of the lands reclaimed for the purpose of constructing major transport infrastructure under WDII, if any, might be suitable for developing a heliport. The WDII is currently undergoing an engineering and planning review process. If Members support this approach, we would provide our input and request into the process. However, given the environmental impact of helicopter operations, we are wary that developing it along the waterfront of WDII would likely create difficult compatibility issues for the future promenade. The proposal would also likely be met with public objections as the environmental impact and its ‘sterilizing effect’ upon the surrounding areas may not fall in line with the public aspiration for a continuous promenade with improved public access and maximized opportunities for public enjoyment.

Development of the Government Helipad

6. As regards the development of the Government helipad at the HKCEC, the Government is prepared to take on board Members’ request for it to accommodate both government and commercial uses. We will proceed with the proposed project accordingly. The plan is to convert the existing ferry pier at the north-eastern corner of the HKCEC into a permanent Government helipad. The pier measures 2,700m² and the land is within the boundary of WDII and is currently zoned “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Helipad” under the draft Wan Chai North Outline Zoning

Plan. No reclamation would be required. A technical feasibility study will soon be conducted to confirm the feasibility of the project.

Helipad Layout and Operation

Annex B

7. As illustrated in the draft layout at Annex B, the Government helipad will comprise two landing/taking-off pads, the use of which will have to comply with the operational and safety restrictions as prescribed by the civil aviation authority to ensure flight and passenger safety. The helipad will also be supported by ancillary facilities including passenger waiting rooms (with a separate room for commercial users), service room and car parking spaces.

8. As set out in our previous Panel paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)968/04-05(03)), Government emergency and essential flying services must have priority at all times in using the helipad. Spare capacity of the helipad would be open to commercial uses at a charge to be determined by the Government. Detailed operational and safety procedures for both Government and commercial operations will be drawn up for endorsement by the civil aviation authority in due course.

Capacity of the Helipad

9. Subject to further feasibility study and the operational procedures to be drawn up, it is estimated that the slots that can be made available to commercial operation would be in the region of 20,000 movements per year, which is about 2.4 times of the traffic volume recorded in 2004.

Consultation

10. We have recently consulted the commercial operators on the draft layout of the helipad. The Hong Kong Regional Heliport Working Group (the Working Group) objected to the proposal because they considered its development scale too small to sufficiently meet the long-term development needs of both domestic and cross-boundary helicopter services. They continued to counter-propose a fully-fledged heliport which requires reclamation of about 2,600m² adjacent to the existing ferry pier – a scheme similar to the one previously presented by the Working Group to the Joint-Panel meeting on 31 January 2005. We have explained to them that reclamation for heliport would unlikely meet the “overriding public need” test required under the Protection of the Harbour

Ordinance.

11. We plan to consult the Wan Chai District Council, the Islands District Council, the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) and the Town Planning Board on the Government helipad project in the coming few months. Subject to confirmation of the project's technical feasibility and funding approval, it is roughly estimated that the helipad may come into operation by 2008 upon completion of construction works.

Economic Development and Labour Bureau

Security Bureau

18 July 2005

Site Search for a Permanent Domestic Heliport
Along the Waterfront on HK Island
from Sheung Wan to Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII)
 (Plan Attached)

No.	Sites	Why Unsuitable
1	“G/IC” site north of Chung Kong Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is currently occupied by an electric sub-station and a salt water pumping station.
2	“G/IC” site south of Chung Kong Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site has been earmarked for the development of a Government joint-user building and the reprovisioning of the Central District Police Headquarters. ● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
3	Ex-Gala Point Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site has been earmarked for the further development of the Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Phase II, and two important environmental improvement projects, namely the Sheung Wan Stormwater Pumping Station (SWSPS) and Harbour Areas Treatment Scheme (HATS) Stage 2.
4	Sheung Wan Waterfront Divisional Police Station site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is currently occupied by a police station. ● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
5	Bus Terminus Site at Chung Kong Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is zoned “Other Specified Uses” annotated ‘Commercial cum Public Transport Terminus and Public Car Park’ on the approved Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan OZP, and is intended for commercial development. It is currently used as the Sheung Wan Bus Terminus. ● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
6	Hong Kong - Macau Ferry Terminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The helipad is located on an elevated platform, which cannot meet the safety standard that single-engine helicopters should use surface-level heliport.

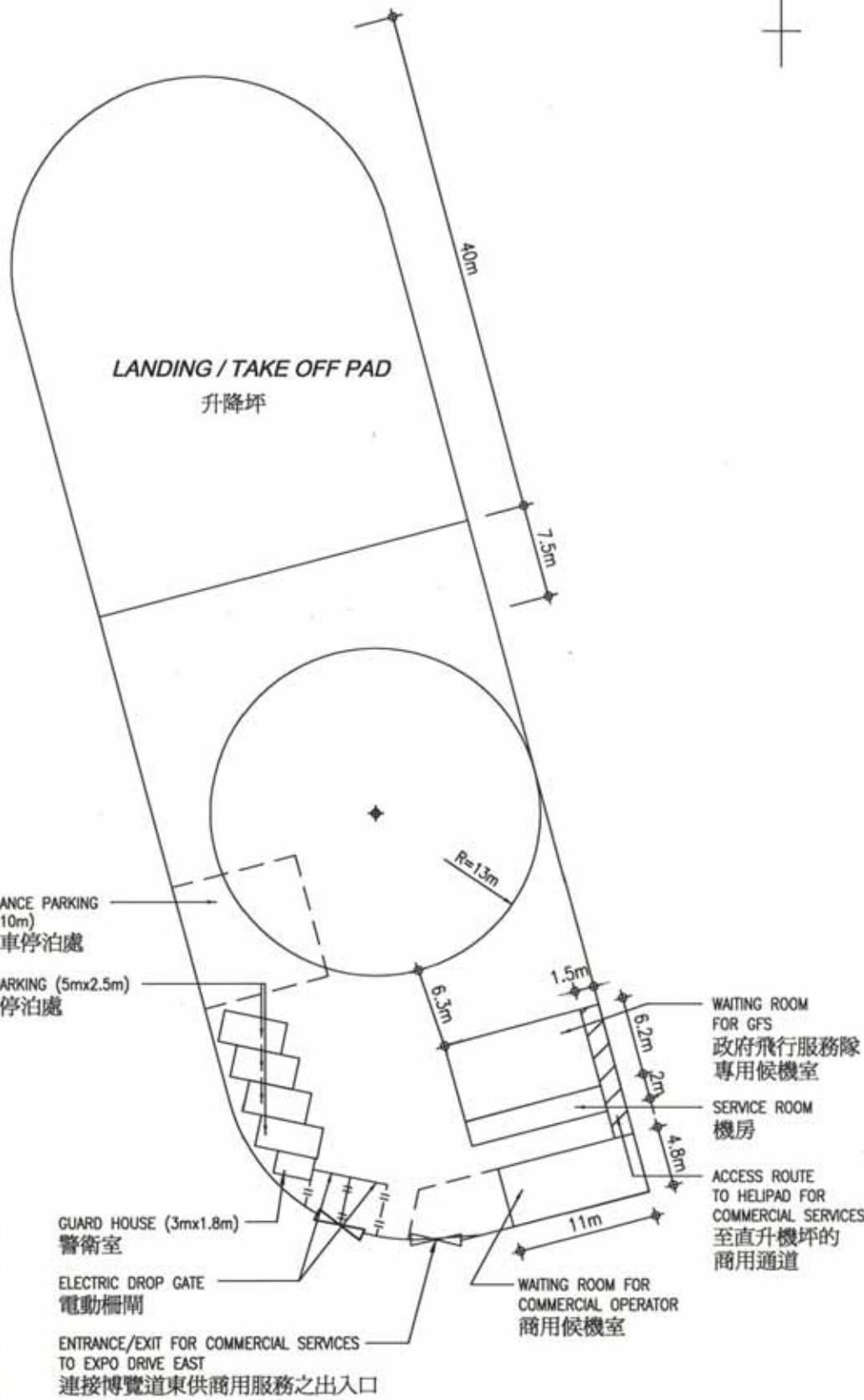
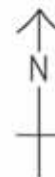
No.	Sites	Why Unsuitable
7	Rumsey Street Multi-Storey Car Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is currently occupied by public car parks and government offices.
8	Water Services Department Central Water Front Salt Water Pumping Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The existing salt water pumping station will soon be decommissioned. However, the site of 290m² is too small to accommodate the helipad facilities.
9	Waterfront area west of Man Fai Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is currently occupied by the Drainage Services Department's Central Sewage Pumping Station, Customs & Excise Department's Landing Area and an amenity area. ● The configuration of the site is too narrow to accommodate the helipad facilities.
10	Site bounded by Man Fai Street and Man Kwong Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is currently occupied by the MTR HK Ventilation Building and an electric sub-station. There is an operational need for the location of these facilities.
11	Roof-top of Piers 1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roof-top area cannot meet the safety standard that single-engine helicopters should use surface-level heliport. ● Commercial helicopter services on top of the piers are not in line with the current planning intention of using the pier tops for public enjoyment of the harbour view. ● The downwash generated during take-off and landing would affect the safety of passengers boarding vessel.
12	CRI Waterfront Promenade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The small size and narrow width of the site would not be able to accommodate the helipad facilities.
13	“Comprehensive Development Area” adjacent to the Piers 4 to 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is zoned for comprehensive commercial development. ● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
14	New Star Ferry Piers (Roof-top of Pier 7 & 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site has been designated for the reprovisioning of the new Star Ferry Piers. A historical heritage design has been adopted for the new piers to recreate the Star Ferry icon/ identity and to

No.	Sites	Why Unsuitable
		<p>reprovision the Clock Tower. Commercial helicopter services on top of the piers are not in line with the pitch roof design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roof-top area cannot meet the safety standard that single-engine helicopters should use surface-level heliport. ● The downwash generated during take-off and landing would affect the safety of passengers boarding vessel.
15	New Public Piers (Roof-top of Pier 9 & 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site has been designated for the reprovisioning of the Queen’s Pier and other landing steps on the existing Central waterfront. ● Roof-top area cannot meet the safety standard that single-engine helicopters should use surface-level heliport. ● The downwash generated during take-off and landing would affect the safety of passengers boarding vessel.
16	CRIII Waterfront Related Commercial and Leisure Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
17	CRIII Waterfront Promenade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site has been zoned for “Open Space” and is intended for development of a waterfront promenade. ● Public consensus has been established for developing a waterfront promenade at the subject site through the due process of statutory town planning procedures and extensive public consultation involving the relevant District Councils and LegCo Panels. ● Helipad facilities will break the continuity of the waterfront promenade at a prominent location in the city and is against the established planning intention for the site.
18	Tamar Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The site is proposed for use as the new Government Headquarters, LegCo building and Civic Square.

No.	Sites	Why Unsuitable
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.
19	G/IC Site North of Citic Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It is not on the waterfront and cannot meet the safety standard of unobstructed flight paths for single-engine helicopters.

Proposed Layout of the Government Helipad at the
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
香港會議展覽中心旁之政府直升機坪設計草圖

Scale 1: 500



AMBULANCE PARKING
(10mx10m)
救護車停泊處

CAR PARKING (5mx2.5m)
車輛停泊處

WAITING ROOM
FOR GFS
政府飛行服務隊
專用候機室

SERVICE ROOM
機房

ACCESS ROUTE
TO HELIPAD FOR
COMMERCIAL SERVICES
至直升機坪的
商用通道

GUARD HOUSE (3mx1.8m)
警衛室

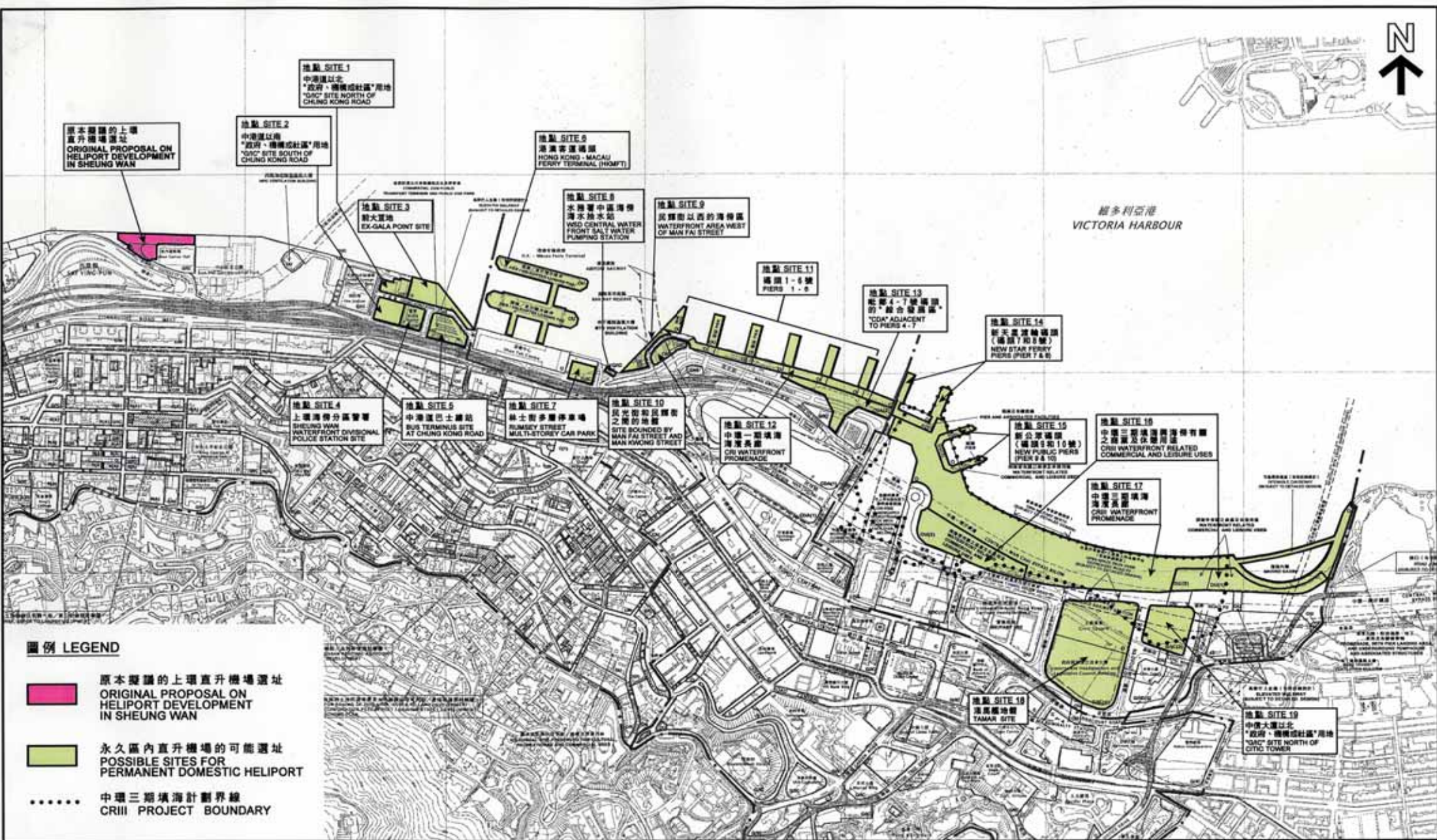
ELECTRIC DROP GATE
電動柵閘

ENTRANCE/EXIT FOR COMMERCIAL SERVICES
TO EXPO DRIVE EAST
連接博覽道東供商用服務之出入口

WAITING ROOM FOR
COMMERCIAL OPERATOR
商用候機室



KEY PLAN
NOT TO SCALE



圖例 LEGEND

- 原本擬議的上環直升機場選址
ORIGINAL PROPOSAL ON HELIPORT DEVELOPMENT IN SHEUNG WAN
- 永久區內直升機場的可能選址
POSSIBLE SITES FOR PERMANENT DOMESTIC HELIPORT
- 中環三期填海計劃界線
CR III PROJECT BOUNDARY

**永久區內直升機場選址
SITE SEARCH FOR
PERMANENT DOMESTIC HELIPORT**

圖 PLAN
MH/05/11

本摘要圖於2005年7月11日繪備，
所根據的資料為：
於2003年12月16日核准的分區計劃大綱圖
編號S/H3/20和
於2003年2月18日核准的分區計劃大綱圖
編號S/H4/12，以及
於2002年12月17日核准的分區計劃大綱圖
編號S/H24/6
EXTRACT PLAN PREPARED ON 11.7.2005
BASED ON THE OUTLINE ZONING PLAN Nos.
S/H3/20 APPROVED ON 16.12.2003,
S/H4/12 APPROVED ON 18.2.2003 AND
S/H24/6 APPROVED ON 17.12.2002

