

Proposed Sheung Shui Poultry Slaughtering Plant

PURPOSE

This paper seeks members' views on the Administration's plan to develop a poultry slaughtering plant in Sheung Shui to minimize the risk of human infection of avian influenza.

BACKGROUND

2. The Administration conducted a public consultation exercise in 2004 to gauge views on the proposal of introducing central or regional slaughtering of live poultry in Hong Kong so as to achieve our policy objective of separating live poultry from humans as a means to prevent human infection of avian influenza. We consulted the North District Council on the proposal at the meeting held on 10 June 2004. After considering views solicited, the Administration now proposes to develop a poultry slaughtering plant in Sheung Shui to put together poultry slaughtering activities.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED SHEUNG SHUI POULTRY SLAUGHTERING PLANT

3. Having conducted a site search exercise, the Administration has identified a suitable site in Sheung Shui and come up with a broad development programme for the proposed slaughtering plant project. The details are provided in the ensuing paragraphs.

Location for the Proposed Slaughtering Plant

4. The identified suitable site is next to the Shek Wu Hui Waste Water Treatment Plant (a location plan is at Annex). With an area of

about 10,500 m², the site is currently part of a works site occupied by the Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation for the development of the Spur Line, but is due to be returned to the Government in the latter half of 2007, subject to there being no delay in the commissioning of the Spur Line. The subject location has the advantages of being close to the border and local poultry farms and of being well-served by an established transportation network. It is not in close proximity to major residential areas and is surrounded mostly by industrial buildings. The nearest residential area is over 200m from the plant. Basic infrastructure such as water and electricity supply and sewage network is readily available. In identifying the location for the plant, the Government has taken into account various relevant factors to avoid causing inconvenience or nuisance to the residents.

Mode of Operation of the Proposed Slaughtering Plant

5. It is the Government's intention to have the plant developed and operated by the private sector since poultry slaughtering business is essentially a commercial activity. The Government will only play a regulatory role in the food hygiene aspect.

6. To cater for consumer needs, we expect that the slaughtering plant will operate throughout the year with a daily slaughtering capacity of 20,000 – 40,000 live chickens and a maximum of 3,000 pigeons and other small sized poultry except water birds with the capacity for expansion to slaughter 60,000 live chickens. Lorries with crates of live chickens and other poultry will go to the slaughtering plant direct from across the border or local farms. The slaughtering process will start after midnight. Dressed poultry will undergo a chilling process and be individually packed and tagged before distribution to retail outlets by enclosed refrigerated vehicles.

7. We expect that most of the slaughtered chickens will be chilled, but it would be a matter for the operator to assess the technical feasibility and the market situation at that time to decide whether or not to provide freshly slaughtered chickens in addition to chilled chickens. To compete with imported chilled chickens and to enhance the financial viability of the plant, the plant operator will have to establish a market

niche and a well-established brand name for the slaughtering plant products.

Planning for the Proposed Slaughtering Plant

8. According to the existing mechanism, we will conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) study on the project as required in the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance as well as a traffic impact assessment. Effective environmental impact control design and measures will be implemented to alleviate any possible nuisance. The slaughtering plant is expected to be enclosed and comprise three major areas, namely the live chicken holding area, slaughtering area and distribution area. Lorries used for delivering live chickens to the slaughtering plant will be fitted with feather-proof nets to prevent nuisance caused during the transportation process. The lorries and the crates thereon will be fully cleansed after unloading of live chickens in an enclosed area within the plant. Dressed chickens will be delivered to retail outlets by vehicles equipped with refrigerating device. Wastewater from the plant will be properly treated before discharge in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Department and Drainage Services Department. Solid waste from the plant will be handled in an appropriate manner. Air from the plant will be deodourised and filtered before emission. Silencers, acoustic lining or shields will be used as appropriate.

9. We will consult the North District Council again after drawing up the mitigation measures upon the completion of the EIA. In the meantime, we will continue to maintain close dialogue with the District Council and relevant rural committee(s) to take on board suggestions made as appropriate in the planning process. In parallel, as the site is currently zoned “Industrial” on the Fanling/Sheung Shui Outline Zoning Plan, we shall initiate a zoning amendment pursuant to the Town Planning Ordinance. Legislative amendment will be introduced to put in place a licensing regime for the operation of the plant which will specify the hygiene standard, the environmental control measures as well as the slaughtering and inspection processes relating to the slaughtering plant.

10. After drawing up the broad development parameters, we shall invite expressions of interest with a view to ascertaining the market interest in the project and gather views of prospective operators on the operational and commercial arrangements for the project for our reference in drawing up the tender documentation. A formal tender exercise will then be conducted to invite bids from the private sector. Given the considerable amount of preparatory work involved, we expect the earliest possible timing for the slaughtering plant to come into operation would be 2009.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to express their views on the project.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
March 2006



title PROPOSED SITE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF POULTRY SLAUGHTERING PLANT IN SHEUNG SHUI - LOCATION PLAN 在上水興建家禽屠房 - 擬建位置圖	drawn by BILLY CHOW	date Feb,2006	drawing no. XA001	scale 1:20000
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