

Possible environmental impacts associated with the proposed extension of the South East New Territories Landfill

Consultation to Sai Kung District Council and stakeholders

Background

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) presented the possible environmental impacts associated with the proposed extension of the South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill to the Clear Water Bay Country Park (hereafter the Project) in LC Paper CB(1) 88/08-09(06) for discussion at the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs (the Panel) at its meeting on 27 October 2008. During the discussion, Members requested EPD to provide more information on the consultation to Sai Kung District Council (SKDC).

2. In response, we summarize below the major consultation activities with the SKDC as well as with local communities and other stakeholders.

Consultation with Sai Kung District Council

3. The EPD adopts a “Continuous Public Involvement” approach and started the public consultation with the SKDC in early 2004 when the Project was in its inception and feasibility exploration stage. Since then, EPD has reported regularly the progress of the Project to SKDC. In addition, we also reported regularly the odour management enhancement measures for the existing SENT Landfill which has been alleged to be one of the possible sources of odour problems in the Tseung Kwan O (TKO) Town South Area. The major consultation activities are tabled below:

Date	Consultation Activities
6 April 2004	EPD attended SKDC meeting and introduced the Project to members. EPD advised that Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Project would be carried out.
4 May 2004	EPD invited SKDC to visit the SENT Landfill. During the visit, EPD presented the operation of the SENT Landfill including the environmental monitoring and control measures. EPD also introduced the Project to members.

Date	Consultation Activities
18 August 2005	EPD attended the Food and Environmental Hygiene Committee (FEHC) meeting of SKDC and explained the operation of the SENT Landfill. A site visit to SENT Landfill was arranged for the FEHC members after the meeting.
10 September 2005	On invitation by EPD, SKDC members, representatives of TKO Owners' Incorporations and residents of TKO Town South Area visited the SENT Landfill. EPD introduced the operation of the SENT Landfill including the environmental management measures on site. The visitors were able to observe the odour control measures on site. Further visits were arranged for SKDC on 20 January 2007, 31 May 2007 and 5 September 2008.
5 September 2006	EPD attended the FEHC meeting and explained the odour control enhancement measures implemented at the SENT Landfill. EPD confirmed at the meeting that a detailed odour impact assessment would be carried out as one of the key items under the EIA of the Project.
20 January 2007	On invitation by EPD, SKDC members visited the SENT Landfill and took a look at the proposed site for the Project. EPD introduced the progress of the feasibility study of the Project.
26 June 2007	On completion of an independent odour audit on the operation of the SENT Landfill conducted by an independent consultant, EPD attended the SKDC Meeting and reported the findings of the independent odour audit. The audit found that the performance of the SENT Landfill complied with the contract requirements and the odour management was in line with the international best practice. Despite these findings, EPD required the landfill contractor to implement a series of additional odour management and control measures on site to further enhance the odour performance of the landfill.
21 August 2007 & 17 September 2007	EPD attended the SKDC FEHC meetings and reported the progress of the implementation of additional odour management and control measures.

Date	Consultation Activities
4 March 2008	<p>EPD attended the SKDC meeting to report the findings of the EIA of the Project (SKDC Paper No. SKDC(M) 4/08). At the meeting, EPD presented clearly to SKDC the potential environmental impacts due to the Project and their mitigation measures. The EIA report concluded that the environmental impacts due to the Project are in compliance with the relevant standards and guidelines under the EIA Ordinance. In the SKDC paper, EPD also summarised the concerns raised by the stakeholders during the public inspection period and the corresponding responses in the EIA report.</p> <p>EPD also reported the findings of an intensive odour detection survey carried out at the TKO Town South Area during the summer period from 18 August 2007 to 1 September 2007. The survey was conducted by specially trained tertiary students with environmental science academic background on a 24-hour a day basis and continued for a period of 14 days. The survey revealed that out of the survey period of 336 hours, “no odour” was observed at the monitoring locations in 99.8% of the time.</p> <p>Moreover, EPD reported the progress on the implementation of various additional odour improvement measures, in particular:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of additional deodorising units at the entrance and weighbridge area; • enhancement of traffic control so that all refuse collection vehicles have to pass through the vehicle washing facility before leaving the SENT Landfill; • liaison with the Transport Department to remove illegally parked waste skips from the roadside in TKO area; • implementation of extra measures, including the provision of movable cover over the special waste trench; installation of extra gas extraction wells; and provision of additional impermeable liner over the buried waste. The capital cost for these extra measures is about HK\$ 20 million.

Date	Consultation Activities
18 July 2008	EPD attended the SKDC meeting to further discuss odour problems in the TKO Town South Area. After discussion, SKDC decided to set up a Concern Group on Malodour Problem from SENT Landfill (hereafter “the Concern Group”) to investigate the odour complaints and identify odour sources in the TKO area, including odour sources other than the SENT Landfill, such as the storm water drainage system and sewerage system, refuse collection vehicles and waste skips on street.
11 September 2008	EPD attended the second meeting of the Concern Group. The meeting concluded that there might be more than one malodour source in TKO Town South Area and therefore, the Concern Group would carry out an independent odour study by academics to identify the odour sources.
14 November 2008	EPD attended the meeting of the Concern Group and discussed the scope of the independent study managed by the Concern Group and Sai Kung District Office to review the odour problem in TKO Town South Area.
Further activities up to now	EPD continued to liaise with the Concern Group and its working group to finalise the study brief and then the selection for appointment of consultants and academics for the independent odour study. EPD will provide technical support to the Concern Group on the odour study.

Consultation with local communities and other stakeholders

4. In the past three years, in addition to close liaison with SKDC, EPD has consulted the local community organisations and rural committee/village representatives. Their suggestions have been carefully considered and where applicable incorporated into the scope of the feasibility study of the Project. Green groups including World Wide Fund, the Conservancy Association, the Kadoorie Farm Botanic Garden Corporation and the Green Lantau Association have been consulted and their suggestions of providing compensation planting to the loss of country park area have been adopted in the EIA study.

5. Starting in January 2008, EPD has also launched an outreach programme and invited students from 48 primary and secondary schools in

TKO Town as well as residents from 42 TKO estates to visit the SENT Landfill so that they could better appreciate the performance of the operating landfill. Some 1 350 students/teachers and local residents in over 40 visits had inspected the landfilling operation and observed the performance of the odour management at the SENT Landfill. At the same time, EPD also took the opportunity to explain to the visitors about the waste management strategy in Hong Kong as part of our environmental education activities. In addition, EPD also put up a series of roving exhibitions at private housing estates and community centres in TKO to educate the public on the overall waste management strategy in Hong Kong including the importance of waste reduction and recycling as well as the role of landfills and modern waste treatment technologies such as waste to energy incineration.

Summary

6. EPD has accorded high priority to the importance of public communication and has put in a lot of efforts in consulting the public on the Project, including SKDC, rural committees, community organizations, green groups, and local residents. Their suggestions have been considered in the study of the Project. EPD will continue the “Continuous Public Involvement” approach throughout the detailed design and implementation of the extension project.

Environmental Protection Department
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