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BY FAX

2 February 2010

Miss Becky Yu
Clerk to Panel on Environmental Affairs
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
(Fax No.: 2869 6794)

Dear Miss Yu,

**Panel on Environmental Affairs
Follow-up to Meeting on 25 January 2010**

- 341DS – Harbour Area Treatment Scheme, stage 2A – upgrading of Stonecutters Island sewage treatment works and preliminary treatment works**
- 359DS – North District sewerage, stage 1 phase 2B**

At the meeting of the Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) on 25 January 2010, Members have requested for supplementary information in relation to the progress of planning work for the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS), stage 2B; the prosecution statistics on illegal sewerage connections within the past three years; and the details of the connecting works in respect of village sewerage projects.

The requested information is set out below for Members' reference.

341DS – Harbour Area Treatment Scheme, stage 2A – upgrading of Stonecutters Island sewage treatment works and preliminary treatment works

Progress of planning work for HATS stage 2B

The scope of HATS stage 2B involves the provision of a biological treatment facility (BTF) on a proposed site adjacent to the Stonecutters Island sewage treatment works (SCISTW). A map showing the boundary of the proposed site is at Annex A. The latest progress of our planning work for stage 2B is as follows –

(i) Amendment to the Stonecutters Island Outline Zoning Plan

The BTF would be located mainly underground by sharing the proposed site with other uses (such as container-related uses) on the surface. Amendment to the Stonecutters Island Outline Zoning Plan (SCIOZP) would be necessary for incorporating the co-use arrangements in our statutory plan.

In May 2008, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) commenced a consultancy study to develop a recommended way forward on the co-use arrangement. The study was completed in June 2009 and it affirmed the feasibility of the co-use arrangement. We subsequently applied to the Town Planning Board (TPB) for rezoning the proposed site in September 2009 and obtained the agreement of the Metro Planning Committee of TPB in December 2009 for proceeding with amending the SCIOZP subject to certain adjustments. We would adhere to the statutory requirements on public participation laid down in the Town Planning Ordinance throughout the plan-making process. Please refer to Annex B for details of the statutory requirements.

(ii) HATS stage 2B Review Study

We would decide the timing for building the BTF based on the results of a review on water quality trends, population growth, sewage flow build-up and other relevant issues. Our plan is to complete the review by end 2011.

Prosecution statistics on illegal sewerage connections within the past three years

Between 2007 and 2009, EPD instituted 25 prosecutions relating to illegal sewerage connections pursuant to the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap 358), among which 22 resulted in convictions and the offenders were fined between \$3,000 and \$25,000.

359DS – North District sewerage, stage 1 phase 2B

Details of the connecting works in respect of village sewerage projects

The village houses sewerage connection rates as at end 2008 for sewered villages in various areas of the New Territories are provided in Annex C.

It has been our aim to extend the sewerage network to all village houses within a sewered area wherever feasible to reduce pollution of the environment and to improve the sanitary condition for the local community. Once public sewers have been laid in an area under the village sewerage programme, the village house owners would be required under the Water Pollution Control (Sewerage) Regulation (Cap 358AL) to convey wastewater arising from their premises to the public sewers. Technical difficulties such as limited space, inadequate hydraulic gradient, costly pumping requirement, obstruction from underground utilities, land resumption issues and encroachment on other's private land might however affect the feasibility of connecting some village houses to the communal sewerage network. Consideration would then be given to intercept the polluted discharges where appropriate.



(Elvis W K Au)

Assistant Director (Water Policy)
for Director of Environmental Protection

c.c. Director of Drainage Services

(Attn : Mr Shiu Wing-yu)

(Attn : Mr Tsui Wai)



**Statutory plan-making requirements in
Town Planning Ordinance**

Under the Town Planning Ordinance,

- (a) all new plans, amendments to approved plans or amendments to draft plans will be exhibited for two months for public inspection;
- (b) any person may make representations (either supportive or adverse) to the Town Planning Board (TPB) within the two-month period;
- (c) TPB shall publish the representations for three weeks for public comments and make available all representations for public inspection;
- (d) any person may make comments (either supportive or adverse) on the representations within the three-week period;
- (e) TPB will hold a meeting to consider the representations and comments. Persons who have submitted representations or comments may attend the meeting and be heard by TPB;
- (f) after the hearing, TPB will decide whether to propose amendments to the draft plan to meet the representations. If TPB decides to propose amendments, such proposed amendments will be published again for three weeks for further representations;
- (g) any person, other than the original 'representer' or 'commenter', may submit further representations (either supportive or adverse) to TPB within the three-week period;
- (h) if adverse further representations are received, TPB will hold another meeting to consider all the further representations, at which the original 'representer' or 'commenter' and the 'further representer' may attend and be heard by TPB;
- (i) after the further hearing, TPB will decide whether to make amendments to the draft plan; and
- (j) upon completion of the representation consideration process, TPB is required to submit the draft plan incorporating the amendments together with the representations, comments and further representations to the Chief Executive in Council for approval within nine months after the plan exhibition period.

Annex C

Village Houses Sewerage Connection Rates

(Figures as at end 2008)

Area	Total nos. of village houses covered	Nos. of village houses connected	Connection rate (%)
Sha Tin	2 328	1 934	83
Tai Po	2 054	1 564	76
North and Yuen Long	1 886	1 226	65
Sai Kung	1 078	950	88
Tsuen Wan	48	37	77
Islands	335	261	78
Total	7 729	5 972	77