

**For discussion on
25 April 2016**

**THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Enhancing Management of Roadside Cargo Compartments

Purpose

This paper reports on the Government's work progress on measures in enhancing management of roadside cargo compartments (commonly known as "skips").

Background

2. The Government attaches great importance in addressing the impact on road traffic and local communities caused by operation of roadside skips. In February 2014, the Government set up a Joint Working Group on Management of Roadside Skips (the "JWG") under which the efforts of relevant bureaux and departments are co-ordinated by the Environment Bureau and the Environmental Protection Department. The JWG comprises the Development Bureau, the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Hong Kong Police Force (the "HKPF"), the Lands Department ("LandsD"), the Transport Department, the Highways Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Home Affairs Department¹.

3. In response to the recommendations made in the Audit's Report No. 61, the JWG has actively investigated ways to enhance and co-ordinate the work of relevant Government bureaux and departments in managing skips, and is making preparations to implement short-term measures to enhance the management of roadside skips and facilitate skip operations.

The Use of Skips

4. Many contractors are now using skips for collection and temporary storage of construction waste generated from construction sites, renovation / refurbishment works in buildings and shops before delivering the collected

¹ Only on a need basis

waste to government landfills or fill banks for disposal. In comparison with placing construction waste in public places such as roadside and pavement awaiting collection for disposal in the past, the use of skips is an effective means to reduce environmental nuisance and facilitate the construction and fitting-out trades to dispose of such wastes in a tidy and orderly manner.

5. According to the information provided by the trade, there are about 3 500 skips in Hong Kong, of which about 1 500 skips are placed in works sites and storage areas. The remaining skips are placed on roads or in public places. The JWG had conducted day and night visits to various black spots of frequent complaints, and found that these places were used for storage of skips and most of the skips placed there were not involved in waste loading and unloading activities. The trade indicated that, due to a lack of sites for storage of idling skips, it was a common practice for them to place the skips on roads and in public places near the landfills and fill banks after they finished delivery of waste for disposal.

6. In the past six years from 2010 to March 2016, there were a total of 19 traffic accidents involving roadside skips and resulted in a total of 30 injuries. Among these accidents, five cases occurred between 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and 14 cases occurred between 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. In all these 19 traffic accidents, the skips concerned were idle and placed at roadside, and were not involved in any loading and unloading activities. Investigations by the HKPF revealed that most of the cases were related to the driving manner of the drivers, and the Police prosecuted seven drivers for careless driving.

Measures for Enhancing the Management of Roadside Skips

7. A review conducted by the JWG found that most of the skips under complaint were being placed on roadside for a prolonged duration by skip operators for convenience. Responses from the trade indicated it was due to a lack of storage sites for idling skips. In light of the findings, the JWG decided to adopt a two-pronged approach in the short-term to tackle the problems caused by placement of skips on the roadside or in the public place, as follows:

- (i) to identify suitable sites to be made available to the skip trade for storage of skips, with a view to reducing the number of such skips placed on roads or in public places; and
- (ii) to enhance enforcement efficiency to enable relevant Government departments to expedite removal of roadside skips that cause

obstruction, inconvenience or danger - on one hand, to achieve greater deterrent effect, and on the other hand, to reduce obstruction to traffic or traffic accidents.

We believe that these two measures, which can be implemented in a relatively shorter time, should effectively alleviate the problems caused by roadside skips.

Provision of Suitable Sites for Storing Skips

8. The JWG has conducted a selection exercise on sites for storing idling skips. Having regard to the factors such as site accessibility, related land use restrictions, distance to residential areas, and that the proposed sites should be near to existing landfills or fill banks so as to facilitate skip operation, the JWG proposes to make available land initially at the Tseung Kwan O Area 137 Fill Bank (“TKOFB”) in Sai Kung and at Siu Lang Shui (“SLS”) in west Tuen Mun for leasing as short-term tenancy sites (“STTs”) to skip operators for storing idling skips. As these two sites are close to the TKOFB and the West New Territories Landfill (“WENT Landfill”), the trades can directly place the skips at these storage sites after delivering wastes to the TKOFB or WENT Landfill so as to avoid causing nuisance to adjoining local communities and road traffic.

9. Regarding the site within the TKOFB, the JWG consulted the Housing and Environmental Hygiene Committee of the Sai Kung District Council on 17 March 2016. The Committee agreed that the Government should strengthen measures on the management of roadside skips, in particular the measure to expedite removal of skips affecting road safety or causing obstruction. On issues concerning the operation of the short-term tenancy and arrangement on supervising the management of the short-term tenancy site, the Committee made suggestions for follow up. The JWG also consulted the Environment, Hygiene and District Development Committee of the Tuen Mun District Council on 18 March 2016 regarding the proposed site in SLS, Tuen Mun. The Committee noted that whilst it was necessary to identify sites for storing idling skips, the Government should also consider in parallel a comprehensive plan for the management of roadside skips. The JWG is preparing the operation details and management plan for the short-term tenancies making reference to the suggestions of the two Committees. The JWG will also explain further the Government’s overall management of roadside skips to these two Committees with a view to inviting tenders for the two selected sites within this year.

10. The TKOFB is a designated waste disposal facility specified in Schedule 1 of the Waste Disposal (Designated Waste Disposal Facility) Regulation (Cap. 354L) and a public fill reception facility specified in Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the Waste Disposal (Charges for Disposal of Construction Waste) Regulation (Cap. 354N). As the selected site at Tseung Kwan O Area 137 is within the boundary of a public fill reception facility, the related Plan numbered P 20332-3 has to be amended and updated to clearly define that the proposed site for storing skips is no longer within the boundaries of the TKOFB. The updated Plan numbered P 20332-3-A is at Annex for reference. We plan to publish the notice for the updated Plan number in the Gazette in end April 2016, with a view to invite tenders for the site near the TKOFB in this year for placing idling skips.

Enhancing Enforcement Efficiency – To Expedite Removal of Skips that Obstruct Roads

11. The Police and LandsD have been actively taking enforcement actions against roadside skips that are placed on roads or in public places. The HKPF takes enforcement action against skips which cause serious obstruction or imminent danger to the public according to Section 4A of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228). Depending on the assessments of the situation at the scene, the scene police officers might, if the skip operators are identified, issue advice and/or warnings to the concerned skip operators and require them to remove the skips immediately. The police would consider also hiring a contractor to remove skips when the skips cause serious obstruction or imminent danger to the public, or refer to LandsD for follow-up for non-emergency cases in which the skips illegally occupied Government land. The skip operators would be prosecuted if there is sufficient evidence for prosecution. Prosecution could also be initiated by the Police by way of summons.

12. The HKPF received 1 230 and 1 208 complaints about roadside skips in 2015 and 2014, respectively. Among the complaint cases received by the HKPF, the number of cases with skips identified by the police officers at the scene was 1 030 cases for 2015 and 1 046 cases for 2014. Advice and/or warning were given by the HKPF under the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228), such that about 80% of the skip(s) were removed by the skip operators themselves within a few hours after issuance of the advice/warnings. The number of skips removed by the HKPF's contractor was 4 in 2015 and 5 in 2014. The number of summons for prosecution issued by the HKPF was 10 in

2015 and 13 in 2014.

13. If the roadside skips under complaint do not cause obstruction, inconvenience or danger to the public or traffic but illegally occupy Government land, the LandsD will conduct site inspections within two working days upon receipt of the complaints or referrals from the police. The LandsD will post notices on the skips according to Section 6 of the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28), requiring the concerned skip owners to remove the skips within one day after the notices are posted, or else the skips will be removed by the contractor of the LandsD. The LandsD received 858 and 1 164 complaints about roadside skips in 2015 and 2014, respectively. For about 99% of these cases, the skips were removed by the skip operators usually within two days after posting of notices by the LandsD under the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28). The number of skips removed by the LandsD's contractor was 8 in 2015 and 14 in 2014. In 2015, the LandsD successfully prosecuted a case involving roadside skip, and the defendant was fined \$1,500 by the court.

14. In order to further enhance enforcement efficiency, the JWG has drawn up the terms and conditions for a dedicated service contract with a view to engage a service provider to support the enforcement departments in speedy removal of skips. This contract service will be commissioned when the sites to be leased as short-term tenancy sites as proposed above are available for placing idling skips, so as to strengthen the management of roadside skips and raise effectiveness of enforcement actions at the same time.

Follow-up Action

15. The JWG is drawing up the operation details and management plans for the two sites for storage of idling skips at SLS in Tuen Mun and at TKOFB, and following up on the suggestions received, with a view to provide suitable sites for the skip trade for storing idling skips as soon as possible within this year.

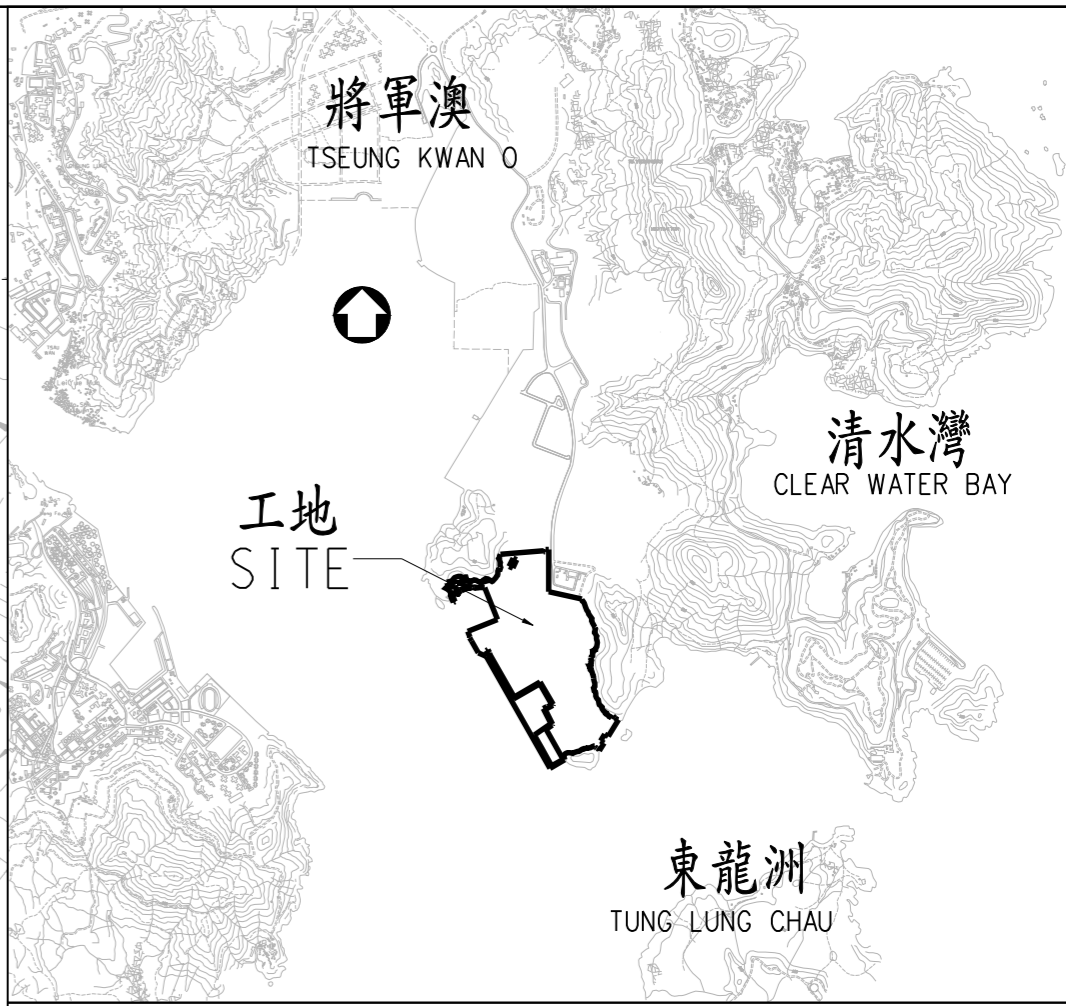
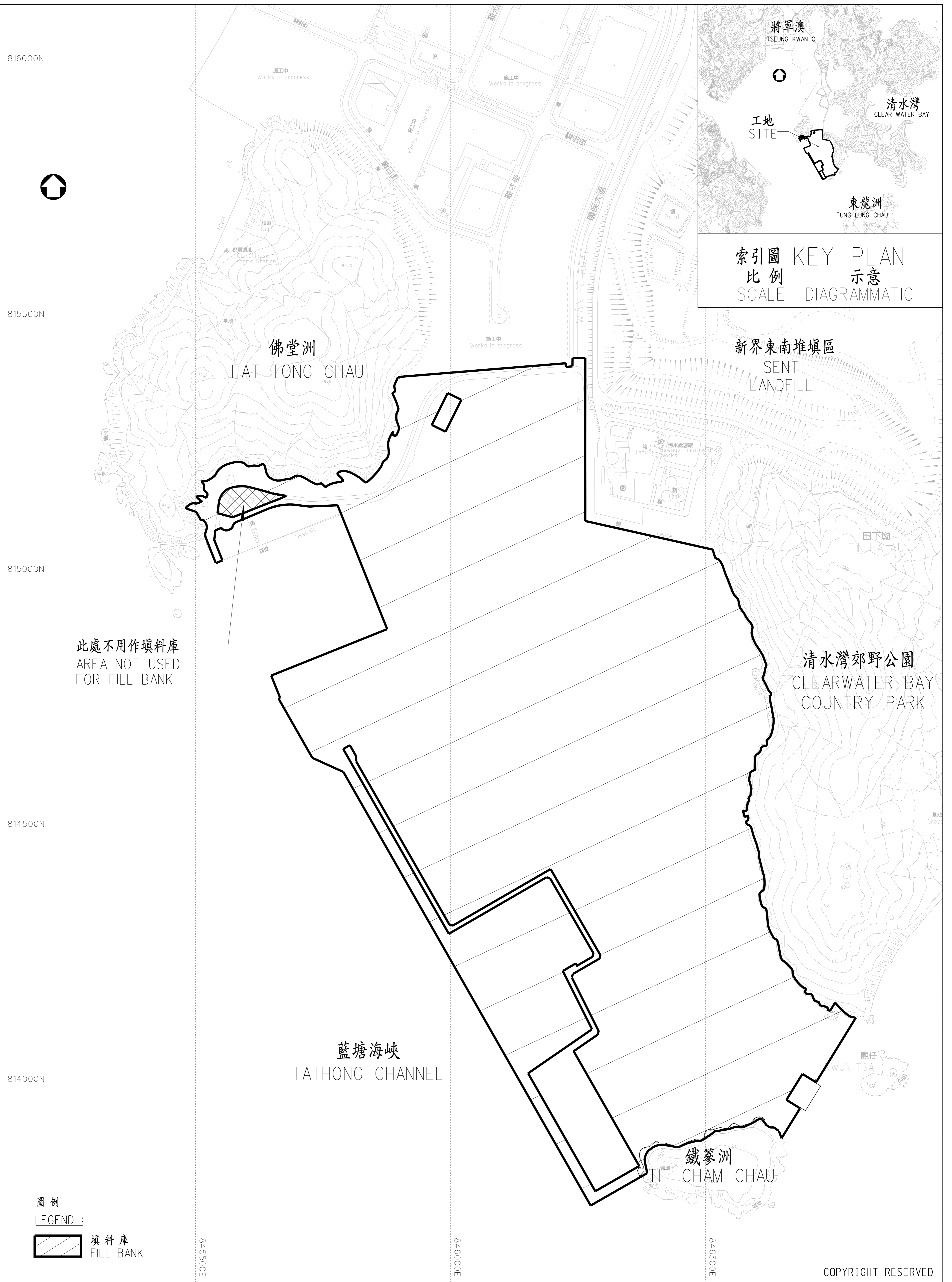
16. The JWG will proceed to implement the above short-term measures, and having regard to the effectiveness of the short-term measures, consider if there is a need to introduce further measures in the longer term, such as a regulatory system or assigning a Government department to take up the overall responsibility for regulating and facilitating skip operations.

Advice Sought

17. Members are invited to note and comment on the work progress of the JWG and the measures to enhance the management of roadside skips.

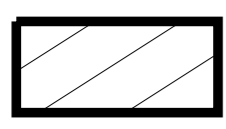
Joint Working Group on Management of Roadside Skips

April 2016




索引圖 KEY PLAN
 比例 示意
 SCALE DIAGRAMMATIC

此處不用作填料庫
 AREA NOT USED
 FOR FILL BANK

圖例
 LEGEND :
 填料庫
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drawing title <h1 style="margin: 0;">將軍澳第137區填料庫</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">TSEUNG KWAN O AREA 137 FILL BANK</h2>	name	initial	date	drawing no.	scale
	designed	C. T. CHOCK			P20332-3-A 1:10000 OR AS SHOWN
	drawn	K. Y. TAM			
	checked	C. T. CHOCK			
	approved	C. K. LAM			
office	FILL MANAGEMENT DIVISION CIVIL ENGINEERING OFFICE			 CEDD CIVIL ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT	