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Subject: Submission on Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters

The Legislative Council Panel on Development should reject this proposal for the following reasons:

1. Hong Kong is not short of building land. Three of the city's developers hold undeveloped banks of former agricultural land in the New Territories with a combined area of 859 hectares. Unused military sites and former industrial sites could also be developed without the need for costly reclamation or "triggering the long-drawn land resumption and clearance process" so feared by the authors of the Paper in front of you.
2. Hong Kong is not short of housing. Hong Kong currently has more than 200,000 empty homes.
3. Therefore the key reason for building the artificial islands around Kau Yi Chau is to "capitalise on Lantau's geographic advantage" to create a new transport network connecting cities in China with Hong Kong. The need for this new network of roads and railways between China and Hong Kong has not been researched or proven. This proposal amounts to using a substantial proportion of Hong Kong's fiscal reserves to singlehandedly fund a symbolic link with China. The Paper (PWP Item No. 768CL - Studies related to Artificial Islands in Central Waters) even states that these transport links "would otherwise not have a case" if the artificial island (which is not needed for land or housing) were not constructed.
4. The Paper makes frequent reference to the report of the Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS). This self serving body and its associated reports have no credibility as the Task Force was specifically selected to represent those who would benefit from the development of Lantau and any independent or objective contributions were suppressed.
5. The Paper tries to justify donating HK\$1 trillion of its people's money to overseas developers and construction companies with banal cliches about the public "living and working in contentment and improving our livelihood". These trite feelgood statements are insulting to our Legislators and the people of Hong Kong because they are cynically

aimed to distract attention from the complete absence of investment in tangible measures to address the Territory's real social needs.

6. A similar attempt to mislead the people of Hong Kong about the true nature of this project has been demonstrated by the clever trickery of associating it only with the Lantau area e.g. 'East Lantau Metropolis'; 'Lantau Vision Tomorrow' so that people living elsewhere in Hong Kong are deceived into believing that it is not a Whole of Hong Kong issue.

Louise Preston