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3 December 2020

Legislative Council Finance Committee Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

(Attn: Ms Angel SHEK)

Dear Ms SHEK,

Paper FCR(2019-20)27 - PWSC(2019-20)5
Issues on Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters

In respect of the letter regarding the subject matter that the Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding submitted to the LegCo Secretariat on 27 November 2020, having consulting the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Development Bureau hereby provides responses.

Yours sincerely,

(Original signed)
(Jacky WU)
for Secretary for Development

C.C.

Director of Planning (Attn: Mr NG Kim-wai)

Director of Civil Engineering and Development (Attn: Mr Raymond IP)

Paper FCR(2019-20)27 - PWSC(2019-20)5
Issues on Studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters

In respect of the letter regarding the subject matter that the Legislative Council (LegCo) Member, Hon Holden CHOW, submitted to the LegCo Secretariat on 27 November 2020, having consulting the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Development Bureau hereby provides responses.

We will uphold the principle of according priority to transport infrastructure in undertaking the studies related to artificial islands in the Central Waters (the Studies). One of the key scope of the Studies is to carrying out a transport infrastructure study¹ that covers road and rail links. The transport infrastructure study will be carried out concurrently with the planning and engineering study for the proposed artificial islands.

If the Studies can commence in mid-2021, we expect to commence the first phase of reclamation works in 2026/2027 with a view to making available the first population intake of the proposed artificial islands in 2034. At the same time, we will also strive to commission the priority road links connecting Hong Kong Island, the proposed artificial islands and Northeast Lantau in 2034 to match with the first population intake, as well as enhancing the traffic capacity between Hong Kong Island, the Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok and the Northwest New Territories.

The details of the transport infrastructure study for the rail links are similar to that of the Railway Development Strategy 2014. The transport infrastructure study will recommend the conceptual proposal and preliminary implementation timetable for each priority rail link. Following the principle of according priority to transport infrastructure, the Government will take forward the priority rail links as soon as possible. After the completion of the relevant study for the rail links and if the proposals are found feasible, the work for next phase will start immediately. However, in view of the complexity of rail projects, we preliminarily estimate that the rail links between the Hong Kong Island, the proposed artificial islands, Northeast Lantau and coastal areas of Tuen Mun cannot be completed at the time of the first population intake of the proposed artificial islands.

¹ The study scope of the transport infrastructure study is set out in paragraph 3(b) of LegCo Paper PWSC(2019-20).

The above-mentioned transport infrastructure study covers the possible road and rail links for longer term, however there is no specific implementation timetable for these connections.

Development Bureau
December 2020