

**For discussion
on 20 April 2021**

Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

**Public Works Programme Item No. 5841CL -
Site Formation and Associated Infrastructural Works
for Development of Columbarium at Siu Ho Wan, Lantau Island**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the project to carry out site formation and associated infrastructural works for the development of a columbarium at Siu Ho Wan, Lantau Island.

Background

2. With a growing and ageing population in Hong Kong, the number of deaths and cremations has been rising year by year. According to the projection based on the latest demographic data, the number of deaths will reach 75 500 in 2040, an increase by almost 50% as compared with the death toll of 50 653 in 2020. The cumulative number of cremations is estimated to be around 1.2 million in the coming 20 years (from 2021 to 2040). There is a growing demand from the public for facilities and services for handling the cremated ashes of the deceased.

3. In response to the public demand, the Government is taking forward the burial policy in a three-pronged approach, namely, increasing the supply of public niches, regulating private columbaria¹ and promoting green burial². On increasing the supply of public niches, the Government

¹ Regarding the regulation of private columbaria, as at 12 April 2021, the Private Columbaria Licensing Board has approved/approved in principle the applications for specified instruments from 22 private columbaria, the sold niches of which are roughly estimated to account for more than half of the total number of private niches sold in the territory. In addition, the applications from around 40 private columbaria have been refused/returned to or withdrawn by the applicants.

² In recent years, the Government has stepped up its promotion efforts on green burial by setting up more Gardens of Remembrance, establishing the Green Burial Central Register, and working in concert with various sectors of the community to turn it into a common practice. While the number of green burial cases involving the scattering of ashes of the deceased is on the rise, interment of ashes in columbarium facilities is still a common approach adopted by the general public.

strives to implement the district-based columbarium development scheme under which all districts in the territory will collectively share the responsibility of developing columbarium facilities. The sites announced under the scheme includes the one at Siu Ho Wan, Lantau Island.

The proposed project

4. The site at Siu Ho Wan³, which is located at the western part of Sham Shui Kok Drive and near to the North Lantau Refuse Transfer Station, is available for developing into a columbarium for providing about 33 500 niches. It is necessary to carry out site formation and associated infrastructural works before proceeding with the columbarium development.

Project scope

5. The scope of works for the project includes:
- (a) site formation for the columbarium development at Siu Ho Wan;
 - (b) widening and re-alignment of a section of the existing Sham Shui Kok Drive to provide pick-up/drop-off points and footpaths;
 - (c) provision of lay-bys and footpaths as pick-up/drop-off points at Sunny Bay Road and Cheung Tung Road; and
 - (d) construction of ancillary works including drainage, sewerage, waterworks, geotechnical and landscaping works.

Plans of the project are at **Annexes 1 and 2**.

Financial implications

6. The capital cost of the project is estimated to be about \$182.09 million in money-of-the-day prices.

³ The size of the site for establishing the concerned columbarium in the Siu Ho Wan Outline Zoning Plan (No. S/I-SHW/2) is 9 300m², which is bigger than the area required for conducting site formation.

Public consultation

7. On 29 November 2016, we briefed the Tsuen Wan District Council⁴ (TWDC) on the proposal of building columbarium facilities at the eastern and western ends of Sham Shui Kok Drive. The TWDC supported the proposal⁵. After review, we incorporated a piece of vacant land adjacent to the western end of Sham Shui Kok Drive into the project to extend the scale of the columbarium development. Upon conducting feasibility study and traffic impact assessment, we confirmed that the extended site at Sham Shui Kok Drive could provide around 33 500 niches. With the consent of the TWDC and the Islands District Council (IsDC) at the meetings on 30 January and 12 February 2018 respectively, the extended development was incorporated into the Siu Ho Wan Outline Zoning Plan (No. S/I-SHW/2) which was approved in 2019.

8. In March 2020, we issued an information paper on the latest progress of the extended columbarium development at the western end of Sham Shui Kok Drive to the TWDC and received no objection. On 29 December 2020, we organised a site visit for TWDC members.

9. In response to the concerns raised by some IsDC Members on the traffic implications, we issued information papers on the project to the IsDC in December 2016, January 2017 and June 2020 for members' reference. A site visit was also organised for IsDC members on 5 January 2017. We did not receive any objection against the project from the IsDC.

10. The road scheme of the project was gazetted under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370) on 12 June 2020. No objection was received. Subsequently, the road scheme was authorised on 18 December 2020.

⁴ The site at Siu Ho Wan is situated at north Lantau and is within Tsuen Wan District.

⁵ The design proposal at that time include two sites (one at the eastern end and the other at the western end of Sham Shui Kok Drive) which can provide 26 000 niches in total. The TWDC supported the proposal and there were views suggesting the Government to concentrate the facilities using the western end and its adjacent vacant land and to look into the feasibility of building more niches.

Traffic implications

11. The traffic impact assessment study has been completed. According to the study, the additional traffic and pedestrian volume arising from the proposed columbarium development during the Ching Ming and Chung Yeung Festivals could be managed with the implementation of appropriate traffic and transport arrangements. After the commissioning of the columbarium facilities, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will work closely with the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and other relevant departments to ensure the implementation of effective traffic and crowd control measures, as well as public transport service arrangements for carrying members of the public to and from the columbarium facilities.

12. During the construction stage, we will set up a Traffic Management Liaison Group and work closely with the Transport Department, the HKPF and other stakeholders, with a view to assessing the effectiveness of various proposals on temporary traffic arrangements and minimising the traffic implications caused by the proposed works.

Environmental implications

13. This project is not a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499). The Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) for the project has been completed. It concludes that the project will not cause long-term adverse impact to the environment. We undertake to adopt the mitigating measures suggested in the PER, including the frequent cleaning and watering of the sites during the construction stage, and the provision of wheel-washing facilities.

Heritage implications

14. The project will not affect any heritage site, i.e. all declared monuments, proposed monuments, graded historic sites/buildings, sites of archaeological interest and government historic sites identified by the Antiquities and Monuments Office.

Land acquisition

15. The project does not require any land acquisition.

Way forward

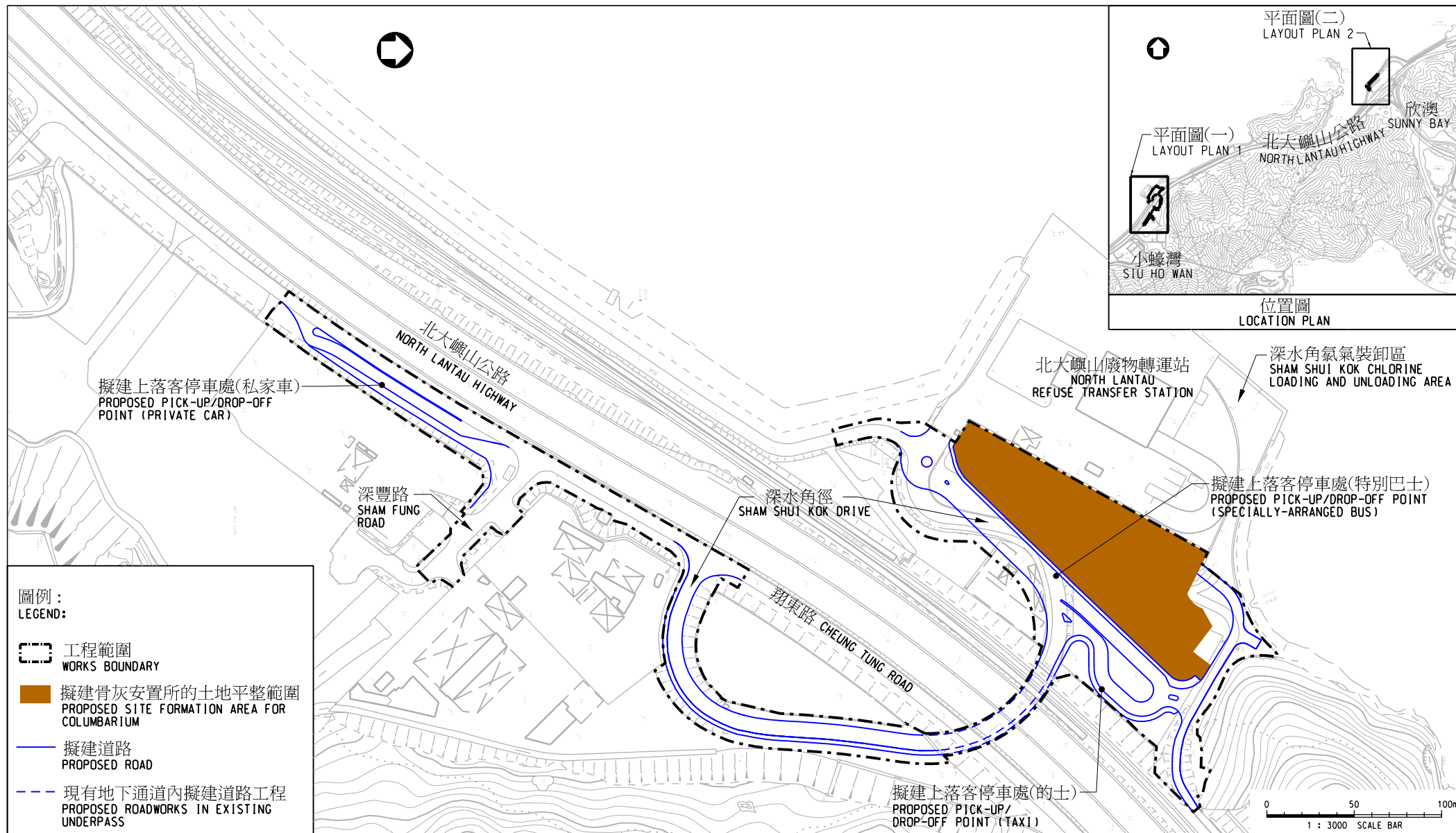
16. We plan to consult the Public Works Subcommittee of the Legislative Council and seek funding approval from the Finance Committee (FC) within this legislative session. We plan to commence the proposed works upon obtaining funding approval from the FC for target completion in around four years to support the subsequent columbarium development.

17. For the building works on the provision of the columbarium and its related facilities, separate funding applications will be submitted in due course to support the relevant development.

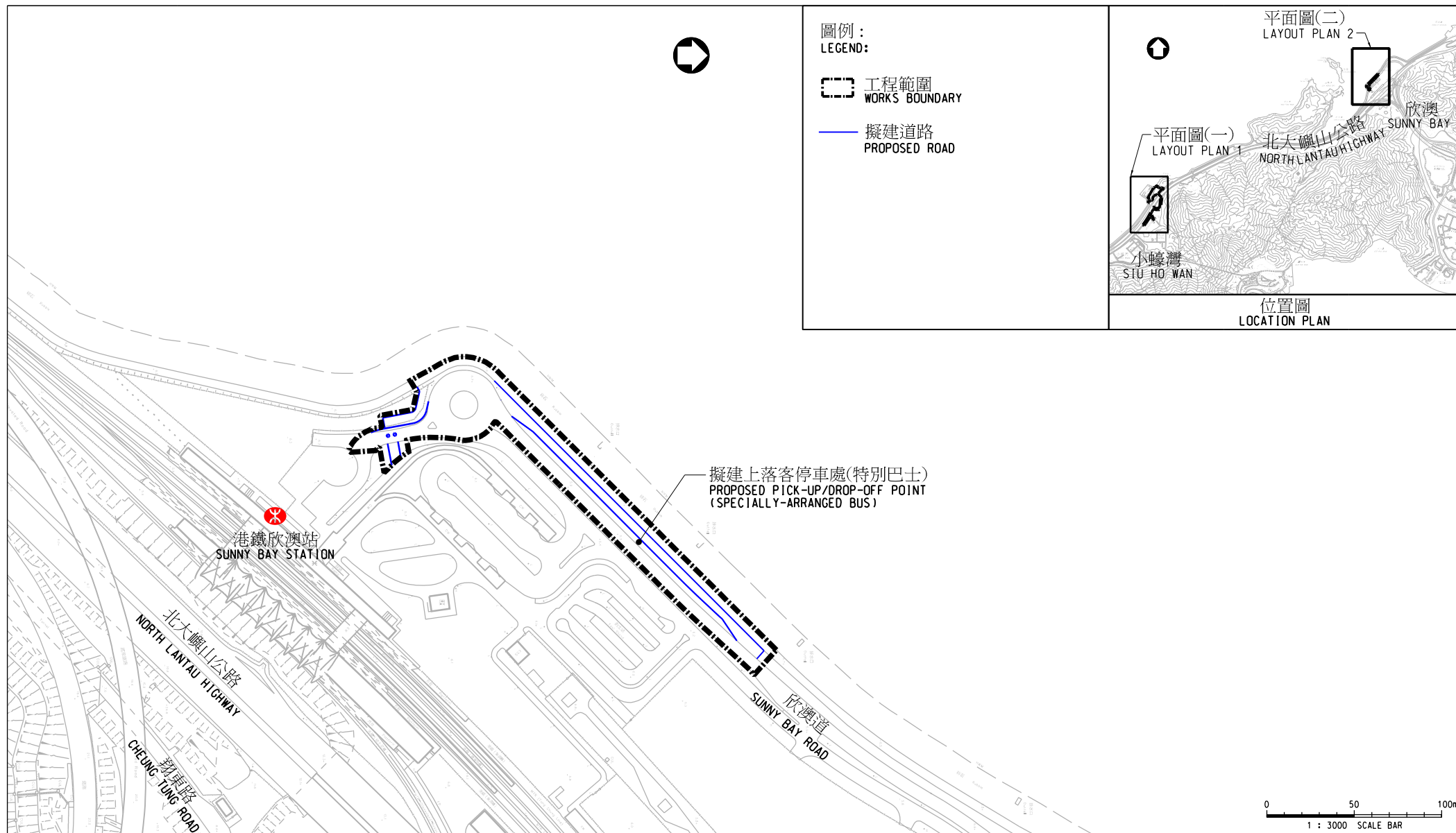
Advice sought

18. Comments from Members on the proposed project are welcome.

Food and Health Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Civil Engineering and Development Department
April 2021



工務計劃項目第841CL號
大嶼山小蠔灣興建骨灰安置所的土地平整及相關基礎設施工程 - 平面圖(一)
PWP ITEM NO. 841CL
SITE FORMATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COLUMBARIUM AT SIU HO WAN IN LANTAU ISLAND - LAYOUT PLAN 1



工務計劃項目第841CL號
 大嶼山小蠔灣興建骨灰安置所的土地平整及相關基礎設施工程 - 平面圖(二)

PWP ITEM NO. 841CL
 SITE FORMATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS FOR DEVELOPMENT
 OF COLUMBARIUM AT SIU HO WAN IN LANTAU ISLAND - LAYOUT PLAN 2