

Stage 1 Public Engagement Report (Executive Summary)

Enhancing Land Supply Strategy

Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour
and Rock Cavern Development



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1 Introduction

A public engagement (PE) exercise was conducted between 10 November 2011 and 31 March 2012 to seek public views on government initiatives to enhance the land supply strategy by a six-pronged approach, including reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. The PE exercise was the first of a two-stage consultation on “Enhancing Land Supply Strategy”.

The PE exercise was co-organised by Development Bureau, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning Department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. To enhance public awareness of the exercise and to encourage public participation, various means were used in information dissemination as described in Appendix I.

A series of PE activities including focus group meetings, topical discussions, public forums and roving exhibitions was organized. Details of these PE activities can be found in Appendix II.

The consultation document, or Stage 1 Public Engagement Digest (Stage 1 Digest), put forward for public discussion the notion of a “**six-pronged land supply strategy**”, which encompasses a flexible deployment of all six existing options for land supply, namely:

- Rezoning land
- Redevelopment
- Land resumption
- Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour
- Rock cavern development
- Reuse of ex-quarry sites

The proposition is that, as all six land supply options have their respective limitations, there is a need to deploy all of the six land supply options flexibly to meet future needs for land resources, in order to facilitate housing provisions and social and economic developments. In addition, a land reserve should be established to meet the changing future needs.

In particular, the Stage 1 Digest sets out **six key topics** for consultation:

- Housing and Development – Hong Kong’s Needs and Opportunities
- Land Reserve
- Increasing Land Supply Through Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour
- Increasing Land Supply Through Rock Cavern Development
- Site Selection Criteria
- Proposed Land Uses and Possible Site Locations

In January 2012, in response to stakeholder suggestions, the Government announced 25 possible reclamation sites outside Victoria Harbour which were divided into four categories comprising artificial islands, reclamation to connect islands, reclamation upon artificial or disturbed shoreline and reclamation on sites close to natural but not protected shoreline. When publicising these sites, the Government had emphasised that they did not constitute a list of selected sites but were more specific sites as illustrations to facilitate the public to consider the initial site selection criteria for reclamation. The map showing the location of the 25 possible sites is in Appendix III.

2 The Consultancy Team

Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Limited (the Consultant) has been commissioned by CEDD to undertake a feasibility study on the two land supply options of reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. The Consultant is also responsible for conducting the PE exercise.

A-World Consulting Limited (the PE Sub-Consultant) has been appointed as the sub-consultant responsible for planning and implementing PE activities.

The Social Sciences Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong (the Research Centre) has been appointed by A-World Consulting as an independent research consultant for the collection, compilation, analysis and reporting of views expressed by stakeholders and members of the public. Both **quantitative and qualitative analytical methods** were used by the Research Centre for the research.

For quantitative analysis, a telephone poll, based on a randomised sample representative of the general population, was conducted. In addition, a feedback questionnaire survey was conducted online as well as through self-administered mode and face-to-face interviews to collect public views. All these feedback were analysed by quantitative method.

Qualitative feedback were collected in PE meetings and other meetings or briefings (recorded in written form) and the online forum of the PE website; through written submissions, comment forms collected during PE activities, signature campaigns / petitions organised by community groups, and newspaper reports, etc. All these feedback were analysed by qualitative method.

The full report of “Report on Stage 1 Public Engagement” can be found at PE website: <http://www/landsupply.hk>, comprising the reports of the Research Centre in their original formats in Sections Two to Four.

3 Overall Summary of Views on Key Topics

One important conclusion of the PE exercise is that there was broad support for the six-pronged approach for enhancing land supply, i.e. using all six land supply options, if the Government considers it strategically important to do so. There was also broad support for the establishment of a land reserve.

Among other topics, the PE exercise focused on consulting stakeholders and the public on the land supply options of reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. A key finding is that views were mixed on reclamation.

A territory-wide telephone poll conducted by the independent Research Centre found more respondents opposing to reclamation than supporting, whereas the feedback questionnaire survey (online, self-administered or face-to-face interview questionnaires), also conducted by the Research Centre, found more respondents in support of reclamation than opposing. In view of the divergent findings of these two surveys, it is considered that there was no consensus on the matter.

The same surveys also found that the major concerns of those who did not support reclamation were related to potential impacts on the environment and local communities. Site location was regarded by many as important when considering reclamation.

As for qualitative feedback, many feedback collected from signature campaigns and petitions organised in local communities¹ opposed some of the 25 possible reclamation sites announced by the Government in response to the public to facilitate discussions on the initial site selection criteria. The main concerns were also potential impacts on the environment and local communities.

On the other hand, there was consensus support for increasing land supply through rock cavern development, with the exception of the possible Mount Davis site. There were some questions about the feasibility of developing rock caverns and the use of the caverns.

Overall, there was broad consensus that impacts on the environment and local communities were the most important considerations for increasing land supply and the most important site selection criteria for reclamation outside Victoria Harbour.

¹ During Stage 1 of the PE exercise, there were 33 signature campaigns /petitions organised to provide feedback, of which 31 were organised in local communities opposing reclamation at some of the 25 possible sites. The 31 signature campaigns /petitions generated 25,196 feedback, or 80% of the 31,881 total qualitative feedback collected.

The following table summarises the views on the six-pronged land supply strategy and each of the six specific key topics as described in Chapter 1 above, based on the compilation, analysis and reporting of the public feedback by the independent Research Centre appointed for the PE exercise.

The quantitative and qualitative views are reported in more detail in Chapter 4.1 and Chapter 4.2 respectively.

Key Topic	Summary of Views
Six-pronged land supply Strategy	There was broad support for the six-pronged approach for enhancing land supply if the Government considers it strategically important to do so.
Land Reserve	There was broad support for the establishment of a land reserve.
Increasing land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour	<p>There was no consensus on increasing land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. Views collected from the telephone poll and feedback questionnaire, analysed quantitatively, were mixed. In the telephone poll, there were fewer respondents supporting reclamation (33.6%) than those not supporting (46.4%). For the feedback questionnaire, it was the reverse, with 49.4% supporting reclamation and 42.5% not supporting. In the qualitative feedback, there was strong opposition to especially some of the 25 illustrative possible reclamation sites, while there were some comments supporting the reclamation option. Many qualitative feedback collected from signature campaigns/petitions organised in local communities opposed reclamation at some of the specific locations.</p> <p>The major concerns of those who were against reclamation were related to impacts on the environment and local communities. Site location was regarded by many such respondents as important when considering reclamation.</p>
Increasing land supply through rock cavern development	There was consensus support for increasing land supply through rock cavern development, with the exception of the possible Mount Davis site. Some expressed concerns about the feasibility of rock cavern development and the use of caverns.

Key Topic	Summary of Views
Initial Site Selection Criteria	There was broad consensus that impacts on the environment and local communities were the most important criteria.
Housing and Development – Hong Kong's Needs and Opportunities	There was broad consensus that more land would be required to meet the needs for providing housing and community facilities, improving the living environment, and enabling infrastructural development. There were many comments that Hong Kong should fully utilise existing inefficiently used land rather than reclamation, that the population policy should be improved and that the land policy should be made in accordance with population policy.
Proposed land use and potential site locations	Many responding to the telephone poll regarded site location as important when considering reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. Many who provided views through signature campaigns/petitions and the feedback questionnaire opposed to reclamation at some of the specific locations. On land use, there were questions about the proposed use of the reclamation sites and the land released from relocating facilities to rock caverns.

4 Methodology and Detailed Summary

The following is a brief introduction of the methodology used in collecting and collating views during Stage 1 of the PE exercise, and a more detailed summary of the quantitative and qualitative feedback collected.

4.1 Quantitative Feedback

Telephone Poll

A territory-wide telephone poll was conducted with a sampling size of 1,472 successful cases selected in accordance with a scientific random sampling method, to provide a representative sample of the adult resident population excluding domestic helpers. One eligible person aged 18 or above and who is able to speak Cantonese, Putonghua or English was selected for interview using the “Next Birthday” rule within each sample household.

The telephone poll was held on a territory-wide basis and the respondents were chosen in a randomised fashion so that the results will better represent the views of the general public. In view of the demographic differences between this sample and the population, weighting was applied by gender and age in order to make the results more representative of the general population. Compared to qualitative feedback, telephone poll represents more of an average person’s views.

Feedback Questionnaire

A bilingual feedback questionnaire was designed by the Research Centre for distribution at selected PE activities, and for online access and submission through the PE website.

Apart from the self-administered mode, the feedback questionnaire was used in face-to-face interviews by qualified researchers from the Research Centre at the majority of the locations where the roving exhibition was held, except two of the venues where face-to-face interviews were not allowed.

8,580 completed feedback questionnaires were collected through face-to-face interviews, online, self-administered mode, and other forms of submission.

Analysis and Reporting: The data collected through the feedback questionnaire were collated and analysed by quantitative method by the independent Research Centre².

Key Findings from Quantitative Feedback

- (i) There was broad support for the six-pronged approach for enhancing land supply. The majority of respondents for the telephone poll (51.5%) either supported or were neutral (31.6%) about the six-pronged approach for enhancing land supply if the Government considers it strategically important to do so.
- (ii) There was no consensus on increasing land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. Views collected from the telephone poll and feedback questionnaire survey were mixed. In the telephone poll, there were fewer respondents supporting reclamation (33.6%) than those not supporting (46.4%). For the feedback questionnaire, it was the reverse, with 49.4% supporting reclamation and 42.5% not supporting. The major concerns of those who did not support reclamation were related to potential impacts on the environment and local communities. Site location was regarded by many as important when considering reclamation. Many respondents to the feedback questionnaire opposed to some of the 25 illustrative possible reclamation sites.
- (iii) There was broad support for relocating suitable existing government facilities into rock caverns to release surface land for other uses (supported by 69.3% in the telephone poll and 73.7% in the feedback questionnaire survey).
- (iv) Respondents regarded the following as the more important site selection criteria for increasing land supply: potential impacts on the environment (rated by 72.9% in the telephone poll and 82% in the feedback questionnaire survey as important); impacts on local communities (rated by 61.9% in the telephone poll and 74.2% in the feedback questionnaire survey as important); and site location (rated by 71.4% in the telephone poll as important).
- (v) There was broad consensus that more land supply would be needed to meet the needs for providing more housing and community facilities (82.1% in the telephone poll and 79.6% in the feedback questionnaire agreed), improving the living environment (76.5% in the telephone poll and 73.1% in

² It should be noted that the feedback questionnaires are not a random sample of any population, so statistical tests, which assume random samples, are not appropriate.

the feedback questionnaire agreed), and enabling infrastructural development (72.5% in the telephone poll and 72.0% in the feedback questionnaire agreed).

- (vi) There was broad support for establishing a land reserve (61.8% in the telephone poll and 65.2% in the feedback questionnaire survey agreed).

4.2 Qualitative Feedback

Collection Channels

The proceedings of different PE activities were video-recorded and the views expressed were summarised for collation and qualitative analysis by the independent Research Centre. Qualitative feedback from the public were collected through various channels, including written submissions, signature campaigns or petitions organised by community groups, the online discussion forum on the PE website, comment forms collected during PE activities, and newspaper reports. Typically, qualitative feedback reflects the views of respondents sufficiently motivated to express their opinions. Feedback collected through these channels were collated by the Research Centre for qualitative analysis.

Number of Feedback Collected

A total of 31,881 qualitative feedback were received by 31 March 2012 through 13 different channels. Out of these 31,881 feedback, 25,769 were received in 33 signature campaigns / petitions, organised mainly in local communities³.

There were 2,376 written submissions. The online forum of the official PE website recorded 1,826 valid posts/ comments.

A total of 388 comment forms were received from participants of the public forums and other PE events. There were 3 focus group meetings, 4 topical discussions, and 3 public forums organised by the Government for the PE exercise. On the other hand, there were 54 meetings or briefings with the District Councils, groups, institutes, residents, political parties and alliances.

There were 432 news articles, 27 columns, and 9 editorials on the subject matter, collected from 24 newspapers and magazines.

³ Of the 33 signature campaigns / petitions, 31 of them were organised in local communities opposing reclamation at some of the specific locations.

Three opinion surveys were received.

Analysis and Reporting: All aforementioned feedback were coded and categorised by the independent Research Centre according to an analytical framework, and analysed using qualitative method.

Key Findings from Qualitative Feedback

- (i) There was broad support for more land supply and the setting up of a land reserve.
- (ii) As regards increasing land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour, strong opposition was expressed, especially as regards some of the 25 illustrative possible reclamation sites. There were some comments supporting the reclamation option. Many comments collected from signature campaigns/petitions organised in local communities opposed reclamation at some of the specific locations. There were many comments concerned about how reclamation would damage the natural environment. There were also a lot of comments, mostly from one of the 25 possible reclamation sites, viz. Wu Kai Sha, that were concerned about how reclamation would affect Hong Kong's general image.
- (iii) There was consensus support for increasing land supply through rock cavern development, with the exception of the possible Mount Davis site. There were some concerns and questions about the feasibility of rock cavern development.
- (iv) For the initial site selection criteria, the primary concerns expressed were the possible impacts on local community and damage to the natural environment.
- (v) There were many comments that Hong Kong should fully utilise existing inefficiently used land rather than reclamation, that the population policy should be improved and that the land policy should be made in accordance with population policy.
- (vi) There were many comments expressing concerns about the insufficient information on the proposed use of the reclamation site or the land released by relocating existing government facilities into rock caverns.

5 Way Forward

Findings from Stage 1 of the PE exercise indicate that members of the public and stakeholders regarded the environment and local communities as the most important site selection criteria in considering reclamation. Site location was also seen by many respondents as important when considering reclamation. Strong opposition to some of the 25 possible reclamation locations, mainly out of concerns about potential impact on the environment and local communities (echoing views on the site selection criteria), was noted.

At the same time, there was broad support for the six-pronged approach for enhancing land supply if the Government considers it strategically important to do so, and the notion of establishing a land reserve also received broad support.

Drawing from public views collected in the first stage of the PE exercise, the Consultant has been conducting further technical assessment in preparation for the next stage. In **Stage 2 of the PE exercise**, a number of locations which may be further studied as potential sites for reclamation or rock cavern development will be put forward for public consultation, taking into account the public views collected during Stage 1. Stakeholders and members of the public will be engaged to discuss, among other topics, whether their concerns about the environment and local communities are adequately addressed in the possible options for sites which could be further looked at in future studies.

Public feedback in Stage 2 will be collected through different channels. After Stage 2 of the PE exercise, with due regard to public views, the next step will be conducting feasibility studies on possible options, with a view to providing land by reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development.

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Based on the findings in the research reports submitted by the Social Sciences
Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong

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Appendix I: Dissemination of Information about the PE Exercise

Stage 1 Public Engagement Digest

An information digest was produced as a discussion tool and to call for public participation. The Stage 1 Digest provides basic information on Hong Kong's need for land, existing land supply options and challenges, approaches to establish land reserve, information on two possible options - reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development, initial site selection criteria, guiding principles, and public engagement. Approximately 13,000 copies of the Digest were distributed at roving exhibitions, PE meetings and other engagement meetings/ briefings, and various PE events. They were also available at 18 District Offices and 67 public libraries.

A set of information leaflets was also produced to provide technical information on reclamation, handling of public fill and rock cavern development.

Publicity video

A nine-minute publicity video was produced to introduce the key features of the Study through different mass platforms, such as the PE website, roving exhibitions and various PE events. Part of this publicity video was abstracted to serve as the basis for the production of an TV Announcement of Public Interest (API) in electronic and/ or outdoor media. The objective is to succinctly convey the background and key messages of the Study, to enhance the reach, visibility, appeal and appreciation, as well as to encourage public participation.

PE website and social media

A PE website was set up with constantly updated contents of the PE exercise and regular responses from the Government in form of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The website also facilitated submission of views through online discussion forum, and online questionnaire survey, as well as enabled online registration for various PE meetings.

As of 31 March 2012, when the PE exercise concluded, the website recorded 44,836 visits, and the online forum received 1,826 valid posts/ comments, all of which were passed to the independent Research Centre for collation and analysis.

All posts from the public were displayed with the exception of those with inappropriate/ offensive language.

A Facebook page and YouTube channel were also set up to provide timely updates, information on PE activities and videos of the four Topical Discussions and three Public Forums for review. The page received over 100 hits of 'like' during the PE exercise.

Publicity

Different publicity initiatives were used to augment the reach and visibility of the PE exercise:

Posters – Short messages were put up on notice boards at District Offices, public libraries, and government facilities with an appeal to participate in the PE exercise and to enhance visibility of the Study.

e-Newsletters – In the course of the PE exercise, updates in the format of e-newsletters were sent regularly to inform stakeholders and subscribers on the mailing list of latest developments and to encourage participation in the PE events.

Newspaper advertisements – Newspaper advertisements were placed to publicise the PE activities, and to call for participation. Three bursts of advertisements were placed – the first in December 2011, the second in January 2012 and the third in February 2012.

TV / Radio API – The API produced for PE was broadcast on television and radio from December 2011 until the end of March 2012, to arouse public awareness, encourage public participation through expressing their views, as well as visiting the PE website to keep abreast of the development.

Outdoor advertisements –Toward the end of the consultation period in late March 2012, the API was put on outdoor media platforms such as LCD screens in office/ commercial building lobbies, MTR East Rail, West Rail and Ma On Shan Lines, MTR trackside and concourse, etc., to encourage submission of views.

Media publicity

A kick-off ceremony was organised at the Olympian City 2 on 10 November 2011 to launch the public engagement exercise in the presence of news media to enhance public awareness. It was dovetailed with the first stop of the roving exhibition. Subsequently a number of media interviews with print and electronic media were conducted to provide information on the Study, such as Hong Kong's need for land, the Government's six-pronged approach to enhance land supply, as well as reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern. Op-eds and advertorials were also published in newspapers to clarify points, and respond to major comments from readers / the general public.

On 4 January 2012, in response to stakeholder suggestions, the Government, by organising a press conference, announced 25 possible reclamation sites as illustrations with a view to facilitating discussion of the site selection criteria.

Appendix II: Public Engagement Activities

1. PE Meetings

A series of different PE meetings was organised, including focus group meetings, topical discussions and public forums.

The focus group meetings and topical discussions provided opportunities for intensive interactions among participants, helping to tease out key issues and interests, especially at the early stage of the process. Public forums were larger scale meetings during which a broad range of views can be expressed.

Participants in the consultation meetings were provided with opportunities to present their views as long as time allows. The news media were present at a number of consultation meetings.

Government officials from the Development Bureau, CEDD and the Planning Department attended all the focus group meetings, topical discussions and public forums. They either attend to clarify and supplement for the discussion, or attend as observers to listen to public views. Their views and comments were not included as opinions for collation and analysis. Some other government departments in addition to the above were invited to send observers to the consultation meetings.

Experts and academics in relevant fields were invited to take part in topical discussions and public forums, with a view to generating informed discussions.

1.1 Focus Groups

Three Focus Group meetings were conducted on 15, 22 and 29 November 2011 to initiate discussions with stakeholders who are interested in the topic.

Stakeholders from think tanks, associations with expertise in land development, green groups, professional institutions, tertiary institutions, political parties, concern groups and student/youth organisations were invited to the focus group meetings to share their views and discuss with other participants. The meetings were attended by 56 participants in total.

1.2 Topical Discussions

Four Topical Discussions dedicated to facilitating in-depth, themed discussion on topics covered in the Study were held on 3 December 2011 (*Topic “Housing and Development – Hong Kong’s Needs and Opportunities”*), 10 December 2011 (*Topic “Land Reserve – Ensuring Timely Supply”*), 7 January 2012 (*Topic “Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour”*), and 14 January 2012 (*Topic “Rock Cavern Development – International experience and possible local application”*) respectively.

The Topical Discussion sessions all started with a brief introduction on the progress of the study and the PE exercise, a presentation by the Consultants on the background of discussion topic, followed by public presentations on related issues. The presentations were mostly made in Cantonese, with simultaneous interpretation for English-speaking participants. The participants then discussed in detail with the aid of a discussion guide in small groups, each facilitated by a scholar or professional whose knowledge on the subject is recognised. Representatives from CEDD, Planning Department and the Consultant joined the groups to provide information and listen to views. The small group discussions then reported back to the floor.

All members of the public were welcomed to the Discussion. The Four Topical Discussions were attended by 197 participants in total. There was an average of three public presentations at each session.

Video recording, consultant presentation, gist of discussion and photos of each topical discussion were uploaded to the PE website for those who could not attend the activity.

1.3 Public Forums

Three Public Forums were organised on three Saturday in February 2012 , i.e. 4, 11 and 18 February 2012 as a broad-based platform to further consult and consolidate opinions collected during earlier parts of Stage 1 PE. The forums were moderated by an independent media professional. The Forums were conducted in Cantonese, with simultaneous interpretation for English-speaking participants.

Each forum started with an introduction on the PE exercise, followed by video show and consultant presentation to appraise participants on key facts and to provide them with essential background for an informed discussion. Afterwards, there were public presentations by members of the public who registered in advance. The forum then went into open floor discussions, for which an expert panel was formed to respond to views from participants and provide their insight to assist the discussion. The panels comprised government representatives, consultants and academia with expertise in environment, urban planning and economics.

Live webcast was arranged for all three forums for the convenience of those who could not attend in person. Online audience would submit comments or questions via a dedicated discussion forum. Written views, submitted either by floor members on comment sheets or by online audiences via the dedicated discussion forum, were randomly drawn and read by the moderator during floor discussion.

All comment sheets collected and online comments posted, whether they were read out during the forum or not, were sent to the independent Research Centre for collation and analysis.

Participants at the forums included general public, students, District Councillors, professionals, residents from different local communities, green groups and other

stakeholders. There was an average of nine public presentations at each Forum. The three public forums were attended by 409 participants in total.

Presentations, photos, video and gist of discussion were uploaded to the PE website subsequently as soon as practicable.

2. Roving Exhibitions

A Roving Exhibition toured 14 stops on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories and the Islands (Lantau, Lamma, Tsing Yi, Ap Lei Chau, and Cheung Chau) to reach out to the community. Information on the Stage 1 Public Engagement was presented at the exhibition to provide visitors with an overview and highlight key topics related to the consultation.

Two interactive games run on tablet computer were designed to facilitate understanding in a fun way, with a view to illustrating the constraints and different considerations in the site selection process.

Public views were collected on site of the Roving Exhibition via self-administered questionnaire survey and open-ended comment sheets. Researchers from the independent Research Centre conducted face-to-face structured interviews at random with visitors of the exhibitions. 672 questionnaires were completed in total which were analysed together with other questionnaires submitted using quantitative method by the Research Centre.

The roving exhibitions, held from early November 2011 to end March 2012, was well-attended by members of the public. A total of 19,489 visitor visited the exhibitions.

